

P O E M S
AND
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,
WITH A
FREE TRANSLATION
OF THE
OEDIPUS TYRANNUS OF SOPHOCLES.

BY
THE REV. THOMAS MAURICE, A. B.
OF
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.

L O N D O N,

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M,DCC,LXXIX.

P. O. E. M. S.

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS

WITH A

FREE TRANSLATION

OF THE

ORDINANCES OF THE

THE REV. THOMAS MARSHALL

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OXFORD

LONDON



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TO HIS GRACE
THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

MY LORD,

TO animate mankind to the practice of virtue, and the conquest of those passions which are most detrimental to society, by holding forth examples taken from real life, either of vice degraded or triumphant virtue, hath ever been the chief aim of those who duly considered the nature and origin of theatrical composition. While Comedy holds the mirror to folly, it is the office of Tragedy to expose to public detestation those vices, to which the distinguished rank of the offender, or the nature of the offence itself, sanctified by the "stupet in titulis" of popular delusion, may have given a long and secure dominion over the human mind.

SOPHOCLES, my Lord, hath given us in the following pages a lively and pathetic instance of the destructive nature of ambition, of the instability of human grandeur, and of the disasters too generally consequent when the passions are not under the due subordination of reason. I am convinced I shall offend no person except yourself, when I add that the steady and tranquil happiness which hath ever attended your Grace in the exercise of every social and domestic virtue, and the universal respect paid to that integrity which neither interest could ever allure, nor ambition ever shake from the basis whereon it is fixed, will be the best proof and the strongest confirmation of the doctrine which this great master of tragic writing and morality hath thus endeavoured to establish.

At a period when the most solemn ties, both religious and civil, are treated with such avowed contempt, to behold those, who are most eminent among our nobility, steadily adhering to the dictates of virtue, and setting so conspicuous an example of parental duty and conjugal affection, must, while it abashes the front of vice, excite in the breast of every good man the sublimest satisfaction, accompanied with the heartiest wishes for its long continuance among mankind.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obliged

And most devoted servant,

Woodford, 15th June, 1779.

THOMAS MAURICE.

P R E F A C E.

MOST of the following Poems have been already submitted to the inspection of the public: under the sanction, however, of so many respectable names, and with the alterations recommended to the Author by many judicious friends, they will perhaps have a better plea to their attention.

To urge, that, of the miscellaneous pieces in this collection, the greater part are juvenile compositions, and that the translation itself is but a continuation of those endeavours which were exerted at a time of life when his ambition indeed was awakened, but his judgment immature, would be an excuse very inadequate to their defects. He is inclined rather to submit them with those defects to the consideration of the reader, and await the sentence, if not of candour, at least of impartiality.

With respect to the **EPISTOLARY VERSES**, the Author has only to intreat the forgiveness of those to whom they have at different times been sent for the liberty his ambition led him to take of uniting their names with his own in a work which, otherwise perhaps, might share the fate common to the poetical productions of the age.

The Poem of **HERO AND LEANDER** is not a regular translation of any part of Moschus; neither is the Eastern Elegy, entitled **HINDA**, offered to the public as a particular imitation of any Asiatic poet: the first was composed as an exercise at school, and the latter was written when the imagination of the Author had been animated with the perusal of those beautiful specimens of Eastern poetry, lately given to the world by Mr. Jones, and Mr. Richardson.

THE PROSPECT OF LIFE was in its original form a paraphrase of a Grecian Chorus: the plan has been since enlarged, but the picture perhaps is too gloomy not to meet with censure.

A writer, who is ambitious of general applause, should never engage in disputes of party: but the present unhappy contest in America is certainly a subject for too extensive concern to fix the stigma of

of faction on the bard who laments it. The **VERSES** therefore written at that æra when those fatal hostilities commenced, will require less apology, because they express, though in an unworthy manner, the sentiments of every true lover of his country.

The Tragedy of the **TRACHINIANS** of Sophocles was performed in the original Greek by the scholars of a gentleman, to whom the Author with gratitude acknowledges himself indebted for his own education. The lines here published, were meant to have been recited, previous to the performance. Though, for some reasons, they were not spoken, he was unwilling to refuse the request of those, who, from being concerned in that performance, had a right to demand the perusal of them. If they meet with their approbation, he shall not be anxious whether or not they can stand the test of severer criticism.

The Poems that follow have been already honoured with a public perusal, and with some share of the public applause.

To the Translation itself are prefixed a few prefatory pages, which will explain the plan on which the Translator has proceeded. That some of the speeches toward the end of the Tragedy appear immoderately long, though some censure may be due to his own want of ability to find words sufficiently expressive of the original idea, is partly to be ascribed to the custom of the Greek dramatic writers, who made the *αγέλος* relate the most interesting events of the play, and often displayed in their speeches, as well as in those of the principal characters, which are likewise generally extended to a considerable length, all that vigour of genius that so strongly marks the tragical writers of antiquity.

Some apology is necessary for the delay in the publication of this book: but those who are acquainted with the difficulties and delays that attend works of this kind when the Author cannot be on the spot, will form in their own minds a better excuse for him, than any he himself can offer.

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A Libretto, sacred to the memory of Elizabeth, Princess of Prussia
Linschoten

A Free Translation of the Ode upon the Death of the Duke of Marlborough

[8]

TO SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L.D.

WHILE Britain's lofty bards his thoughts engage,
Will Johnson smile on this ignobler page?
From thee her flame my infant fancy caught,
And kindled at thy page the glowing thought;
Learn'd, by thy light, her steady course to guide,
Tempt the rough shore, and brave the deepening tide.

What equal tribute shall the muse prepare;
What heights of rapid song unusual dare?
But when her hand hath swept the noblest wires,
Above her boldest flights thy praise aspires:
The wise, the virtuous venerate thy name;
This is thy praise, and this the noblest fame.

Oh truly great! whose generous, active mind
Scorns ev'ry labour but to bless mankind!
Thine the high task a nation to reform,
The rising race with virtuous hopes to warm;

With folly's sons eternal war to wage,
And lash the crimes of an abandon'd age.

Beset with ills, oppress'd by nameless woes,
Superior to their rage, thy genius rose :
Unable these to crush thy great design,
To damp thy piety, thy thoughts confine!
On wealth, and power, thy steadfast soul looks down,
Regardless if the mighty smile or frown.
Guilt is thy foe, guilt open, or conceal'd,
And none are safe whom virtue does not shield :
When in her cause thou draw'st the righteous sword,
It wounds, alike, the peasant and the lord.

By thee refin'd, to full perfection brought,
We rival Greece in language, as in thought ;
Genius soars bolder, fancy brighter shines,
And manlier vigour animates our lines.
Let blockheads rail, whose precepts, wisely, teach
To call *obscure*, what dullness cannot reach ;
Thy labour'd volume claims our noblest praise,
That loftier sense in loftier sound conveys.
How sweet, how strong, the polish'd periods roll,
With thoughts that rouse, transport, convince the soul!

But are there some, the steady foes of worth,
 Still prompt to give the embryo falshood birth,
 Who strive to blacken thy illustrious name,
 By each mean art that dark revenge can frame;
 Attack the firmness of an honest heart,
 That scorns, alike, the knave's or villain's part;
 Faction's base sons, who principle disdain,
 Or know no principle, but that of gain?
 If such there are, ev'n these thou can'st despise,
 Ev'n these thy fix'd integrity defies:
 Thy fame shall flourish when their mem'ries rot,
 Their rage, their writings, like their names, forgot.

What bold, ambitious hopes, my bosom warm,
 Oft' as my eyes behold thy honour'd form;
 As all the labours of thy life I trace,
 Thy glory, and the glory of our race!
 Thy mind, retaining still her wonted fires,
 With added years increasing strength acquires:
 Vig'rous, as when to Juvenal's manly page
 Thy muse congenial gave rekindled rage.
 But thy ambition boasts a nobler aim,
 Than man's applauses, and the bubble, fame;

Anxious to gain, and eager to secure,
That brighter meed to patient virtue sure ;
Thine are the joys, that animate the just,
And lift the soul above its kindred dust :
Ev'n here, the dazzling scenes entrance thy fight,
While conscience gives a seraph's pure delight.

To the Reverend THOMAS PERCY, D.D.

FROM classic plains, where science loves to dwell,
Sooth'd with the warblings of her Attic shell;
From bowers, where patriots, sages, kings, have stray'd,
With wisdom musing in the laurel shade;
Friend to the muse, this votive verse receive,
Praise what you can, and what you may, forgive.

Hither that muse thy favour'd footstep led,
And wreath'd a chaplet round thy youthful head:
Here bade thy soul, with daring search, explore
The rich, exhaustless mines of antient lore;
Reach the bold flights of Plato's fire-clad thought,
And scan the truths his greater master taught:
Wiseft of men, whose firm unshaken soul
Beheld, without dismay, the deadly bowl,
Nor cou'd ungrateful Athens blast a name,
That still shall shine, their glory and their shame.
Here to thy view bade Athen's patriot rise,
Fate in his voice, and light'ning in his eyes,

The

The foes of Greece and freedom to confound,
 And dash the pride of Philip to the ground :
 Or warm'd thee with the sound of Tully's tongue,
 On which admiring Rome with rapture hung,
 Taught thee what strains the Theban roll'd along,
 And all the sweets of Maro's polish'd song.

Oft, 'midst these kindred glades, thy mind might trace
 The mystic page of Mona's antient race ;
 Whom, trembling thro' her forests inmost gloom,
 She pour'd by midnight from her cavern'd womb ;
 Prophets, whose eyes the depths of fate cou'd pierce,
 Who burst the bands of death with magic verse :
 And those of later day, with rage sublime,
 Who smote the harp, and rous'd the soul of rhyme ;
 Whose martial strains rehears'd the toils of fight,
 And warm'd the heart of many a hardy knight :
 How, like a rock, each lion-chieftain stood,
 Or urg'd his panting steed thro' seas of hostile blood.

Methinks I see, where Alnwick's turrets hoar
 Darken her flood, so often stain'd with gore,
 A thousand heroes fill the spacious hall,
 And helms and lances hang the frowning wall.

Full in the center of the warlike band,
 I see a chief of bolder visage stand ;
 With keener flames his glist'ning eye-balls shine,
 And his port marks him of the *Percy* line—
 The song begins ; the minstrels sweep the string,
 And the high roofs with martial clangors ring :
 Of tournament they sing, and tented plain,
 A *Percy* victor, or a *Douglas* slain,
 Or *Arthur's* feats, in daring lays rehearse,
 Or *Edward's* conquests swell the mighty verse;
 The sounds, like light'ning, pierce each warrior's soul,
 And life's warm tides in brisker currents roll ;
 Their spears they shake, and clash the burnish'd shield,
 And seem triumphant e'er they reach the field—

Bold were the notes, and kings approv'd the song,
 Like those who heard, unpolish'd, rough, and strong ;
 But cou'd not o'er the arm of death prevail,
 When all the powers of song and music fail :
 Time, with oblivious hand, defac'd the page,
 And virtue only triumph'd o'er his rage :
 Their rugged numbers we no more admire,
 Yet tho' their language fails, their raptures fire.
 PERCY, 'twas thine to cull each nobler lay,
 And give new verdure to the wither'd bay ;

The blooms of infant genius to restore,
 Teach them to spread, and bid them fade no more—
 For long as genuine passion sways the heart,
 And nature's painting shames the strokes of art,
 Britain shall love the strain that sings, so well,
 How her bold antient heroes fought and fell :
 Her rising offspring kindle as they read,
 And burn, like them, to conquer or to bleed—

To the A U T H O R of P O E M S
And TRANSLATIONS from the Asiatic Languages.

W H I T H E R does fancy stretch her rapid wing,
Thro' what new regions of serener spring?
My ravish'd sense an opening Eden greets,
A waste of treasures, and a wild of sweets—
And now I seem thro' fairy bow'rs to stray,
Where scatter'd rubies pave the spangled way;
Transparent walks, with polish'd sapphires bright,
And * fountains, sparkling with ambrosial light.

A sweeter lyre no Eastern swain hath strung,
More softly warbled, or more boldly sung;
Whether, great Bard, thy vigorous muse rehearse
Solima's deathless praise, in deathless verse;
Paint the bright virtues of her generous mind,
Great as thy own, and as thy own refin'd;
Or, tun'd to grief, the melting numbers move,
And breathe the softest tales of plaintive love:

* Alluding to the poem of the Seven Fountains. See page 33.

Tender as Petrarch's flows th' impassion'd line,
Nor Vida boasts a chaster page than thine.

Yet not that Britain's laurels round thy head,
And Arab's palms with rival lustre spread,
For this I sing—but, that, with fix'd disdain,
Thy Roman soul refus'd the flatterer's strain;
And dar'd prefer, (unvers'd in courtly guile)
Virtue's just praise beyond a Monarch's smile.

To the Most Noble the MARQUIS of BLANDFORD,
after having seen Blenheim House.

SUCH the proud monument of Churchill's fame,
Albion, thy boast, and vanquish'd Bourbon's shame;
Yet tho' the roofs, with storied triumphs bright,
Pour on our eyes a flood of mimic light,
Tho' the rich walls, in breathing filks array'd,
Boast all the blended pomp of light and shade;
He claims a surer fame than these can give,
On nobler monuments his triumphs live:
For when this towering mansion shall decay,
(Forgive, great Architect, the daring lay)
When Time shall dash to earth the mould'ring bust,
And yon proud column crumbles into dust,
In Britain's love his mem'ry still shall bloom,
And anxious nations guard the warrior's tomb.

Here, BLANDFORD, oft, as to thy wond'ring eyes
His deathless feats in bright succession rise,
Congenial transports in thy bosom roll,
And half his spirit fires thy infant soul.

But far from thee be war's tumultuous rage,
 Nor let ambition taint thy tender age;
 Let Spencer's bright example teach thy mind
 Sublimer joys, and transports more refin'd :
 Like him, thy hand to pining want extend,
 Protect the orphan, and the wretch befriend.
 These, these are arts that give more true renown,
 Than captive nations, and a world o'erthrown.
 But if thy country call thee to her cause,
 If freedom mourn her violated laws ;
 Then let thine arm the righteous sabre wield,
 And be another Churchill in the field.

Yon less superb, yet not less glorious * pile,
 Rear'd its fair front beneath his guardian smile :
 There, the pale victim of disease and grief,
 Directs his feeble step, and finds relief :

* The Infirmary at Oxford, erected upon the most extensive and useful plan, by the Trustees of Dr. Radcliff's benefaction, out of the surplus money remaining after defraying the expences of his library, and supported by the ample contributions of his Grace the Duke of Marlborough, and others of the nobility and gentry of Oxfordshire. His Grace has likewise been a considerable benefactor to the University, by presenting it with an extensive tract of ground for building an Observatory on, and with a reflecting telescope of twelve feet, made by the late Mr. Short, which is the largest instrument of the kind ever made in England, (one only excepted, finished by the same artist for the late King of Spain) and is of great value.

Despair's

Despair's wan cheeks the flush of life resume,
 And his pray'rs consecrate the hallow'd dome :
 His grateful tongue of Radcliffe's bounty tells,
 And on thy parent's name with rapture dwells.
 The laurel'd sons of Isis' happy vale
 Catch the glad sound, and swell the applauding gale ;
 Her Naiads propagate the fav'rite theme,
 And all her echoes waft it down the stream.

But lo! attended by her infant train,
 That sport around her on the velvet plain,
 Like the first blooming Eve, ere fatal pride.
 Led her fair feet from innocence aside,
 The beauteous Marlbro' seeks her wonted shade,
 Where Persian odours breathe thro' yonder glade ;
 Her fairer Paradise—for all the flowers
 That shed their soft perfumes in eastern bowers,
 Transplanted there their purple blooms expand,
 And live and flourish by her fost'ring hand.
 But who are these, that flush'd with all the glow
 Which health and youthful beauty can bestow,
 Amidst those spicy shrubs, themselves more sweet,
 Advance to meet her in her lov'd retreat?

In whom those charms, and ev'ry beauteous line
 That marks her features, by reflection shine :
 Our dazzled sight their rival splendors tire,
 Nor know we which most justly to admire,
 (So like they shine in ev'ry nobler grace)
 The lovely parent, or her blooming race.

Hence let us haste to yonder rugged steep,
 Down whose grey sides the plunging waters sweep ;
 Or climb yon mountain, black with hanging wood,
 Round whose broad basis winds the deep'ning flood,
 That, rolling thro' the spacious valley, thames,
 With its proud waves, the meaner tide of Thames.
 Such, Brown, the wonders of thy plastic hand ;
 The new creation sprang at thy command ;
 And yon stupendous arch surveys his tide
 Astonish'd, spread with all an ocean's pride.

Beneath those elms, in Britain's elder time,
 Old Chaucer pour'd his legendary rhyme :
 To hear his wond'rous tales, the list'ning moon
 Check'd her bright axle at its highest noon ;
 While many a wood-nymph round the bard would throng,
 And dance responsive to his midnight song.

To these dear glooms, from battle's glorious toils,
 With honours laden, and triumphal spoils,
 Great Henry fled *, to lose in beauty's charms
 The care of kingdoms, and the din of arms :
 To rapture here, and Rosamond resign'd,
 New passions fir'd the royal Victor's mind :
 The clearest springs they sought, the darkest groves,
 And ev'ry bower was conscious to their loves,
 But short the bliss unholy joys afford,
 His raging consort seeks her absent lord ;
 And Rosamond, from love and Henry torn,
 Retires to weep in yonder glooms forlorn.
 Oh never more may guilty transports stain
 These hallow'd haunts, nor jealous fires profane ;
 But ev'ry future lord, like Spenser, prove
 The sweets of social life, and spotless love !

* Henry the Second.

HERO AND LEANDER.

STRETCH'D on Abydos' solitary strand,
 With eye erect to heav'n, and suppliant hand,
 Leander lay: the tempest blacker grew,
 And veil'd that heav'n for ever from his view!
 He marks the boisterous hurricanes that sweep,
 With madd'ning rage, the surface of the deep:
 But fiercer storms within his bosom roll,
 And furious gusts of passion tear his soul.
 Absence and wild despair at once conspire
 To swell the tumult, and inflame desire:
 Sudden he starts, and thus, in frantic mood,
 Pours his loud complaints to the remorseless flood.
 "Thou restless deep, whose hostile waves divide
 "An eager lover, and his anxious bride,
 "Ah cease thy rage; ye tempests rave no more,
 "Nor bar my passage to the wish'd-for shore:
 "Much have I borne beneath your bleak domain,
 "As each dark eve I cross'd the watry plain,

" Raging

" Raging with fierce, impatient fires, to share
 " The fond embraces of my absent fair :
 " Witness thou friendly torch, whose glimmering light
 " Chear'd the dull horrors of the dusky night ;
 " Witness ye conscious tow'rs, that oft have seen
 " The trembling transports of your love-sick queen ;
 " When in her arms my dropping limbs she prest,
 " And clasp'd me breathless, fainting to her breast.
 " Dear, transient scenes ! but ah ! must never more
 " These eyes with rapture view the Thracian shore ?
 " Shall intervening seas, and adverse wind,
 " Damp or restrain the lover's active mind ?
 " No, let me plunge amidst the foam, and brave
 " All the wild fury of the dashing wave :
 " Soon on yon cliffs shall blaze my well-known guide,
 " While Hero's name shall bear me thro' the tide.
 " Fir'd at the sound, my soul within me burns,
 " And danger, toil and fate indignant spurns."
 He spake, and rushing down the rocky steep,
 Plung'd in the bosom of the hoary deep.

Now darkness, brooding o'er the vast profound,
 Had spread her dragon wing o'er all around :

The pale moon sunk amidst the tenfold night,
 And ev'ry star with-held its chearing light :
 Descending torrents, mix'd with ruddy flame,
 Roar'd to the howling blast in loud acclaim ;
 The pealing thunders broke thro' heav'n's cleft plain,
 And shook the caverns of the groaning main ;
 Nor ceas'd the lightnings, with destructive glare,
 To flash impetuous thro' the dusky air.
 Leander, frantic with amaze and dread,
 Amidst the billows rear'd his languid head,
 And sought the faithful lamp, but none appear'd,
 And not a ray the dark horizon chear'd,
 Save where the lightning shot a dreadful gleam,
 Or sparkles glisten'd on the glowing stream.
 In vain to heav'n he lifts his haggard eyes,
 Adds vow to vow, and wearies Jove with cries :
 No pitying God would grant a lover's pray'r,
 Nor Venus hear his wailings of despair.
 He next invokes old Neptune to his aid,
 And ev'ry nymph, and ev'ry blue-ey'd maid,
 In vain ; relentless fate had seal'd his doom ;
 The deep, to overwhelm him, opes her yawning womb.

Exhausted

Exhausted with fatigue, at length he gave
 His languid limbs to float along the wave;
 Then, heaving from his breast a mighty sigh,
 Exclaim'd, "'Tis heaven's decree, and I must die :
 " Must die, my Hero, ere these circling arms
 " Once more, in thine, embrace an angel's charms.
 " Ye cruel winds, ye sportive tempests, hear
 " These my last words, and waft them to my dear.
 " Tell her, not all your rage combin'd could move
 " This constant soul, nor quench the fire of love :
 " Tell her, for her I brav'd the boist'rous tide,
 " For her the madness of the storm—and died."
 He said; and darkness rushing on his sight,
 Wrapt the pale lover in eternal night.

Hero meanwhile, with anxious cares oppress'd,
 A thousand passions struggling in her breast,
 Pass'd in suspense her tedious hours away,
 The night in watching, and in tears the day.
 Now, from the highest tow'r she stretch'd, with pain,
 Her eager eyes o'er all the boundless main;
 Now with her slaves from room to room she flies,
 Till the wide dome resounded with their cries.

At length she paus'd, her strength began to fail,
And thus she spake, with faltering lips and pale—

“ Dear partners of my grief, who more than share
“ In all the complicated pangs I bear,
“ Did ever wretch such various tortures know,
“ Toil with like cares, or bend with equal woe?
“ I sink, I sink beneath the mighty weight,
“ And yield me to the torrent of my fate—
“ Thrice hath the moon her nightly journey roll'd,
“ Nor yet these arms the lovely youth infold;
“ Perhaps, already, weltring on the wave,
“ O'er his pale head the circling billows rave.
“ Hah there!—I see him mangled, gash'd, and torn,
“ Wide o'er the howling waste of waters borne.
“ I see him dash'd against the rocky shore,
“ His beauteous limbs all black with wounds and gore:
“ Help, help, ye powers!”—the fainting princess said,
And her slaves bear her to the royal bed.

In vain she strove her languid eye to close,
And lose the sense of grief in sweet repose,
Such dreadful scenes within her bosom wrought,
And doubt and terror darken ev'ry thought:

Before her sight the ghastly phantom stood,
 All deadly pale, and smear'd with clotted blood;
 Dreadful it smil'd, as o'er her prostrate charms
 It seem'd to hang, and stretch its empty arms.
 The gloomy vision fir'd her madd'ning brain,
 And wilder horror shot thro' ev'ry vein.
 She started from the couch in wild despair,
 Beat her white breast and tore her raven hair;
 Then, rushing forth, the rocky heights ascends,
 Where widest o'er the wave the turret bends;
 Rolling her fiery eyes from side to side,
 Soon as her lover's floating corpse she spied,
 Headlong she darted from the giddy steep,
 And sunk for ever in the whelming deep.

HINDA; an Eastern Elegy.

LED by the star of evening's guiding fires,
 That shone serene on Aden's lofty spires,
 Young Agib trod the solitary plain,
 Where groves of spikenard greet his sense in vain :
 In wealth o'er all the neighbouring swains supreme,
 For manly beauty ev'ry virgin's theme ;
 But no repose his anxious bosom found,
 Where sorrow cherish'd an eternal wound.
 The frequent sigh, wan look, and frantic start,
 Spoke the despair that prey'd upon his heart.
 The haunts of men no more his steps invite,
 Nor India's treasures give his soul delight.
 In fields and deep'ning shades he sought relief,
 And thus discharg'd the torrent of his grief.

' Ye swains, that thro' the bow'rs of pleasure rove,
 ' Ye nymphs, that range the myrtle glades of love,
 ' Forgive a wretch, whose feet your bow'rs prophane,
 ' Where joy alone and happy lovers reign :

' But

' But oh! this breast incessant cares corrode,
 ' And urge my fainting steps to death's abode!
 ' Joyless to me the seasons roll away,
 —' Exhausted nature hurries to decay;
 ' Day's chearful beams for me in vain return,
 ' For me the stars of heav'n neglected burn:
 ' In vain the flow'rs in wild luxuriance blow,
 ' In vain the fruits with purple radiance glow;
 ' In vain the harvest groans, the vintage bleeds,
 ' Grief urges grief, and toil to toil succeeds:
 ' Since she whose presence bade the world be gay,
 ' Whose charms gave lustre to the brightest day,
 ' HINDA, once fairest of the virgin train,
 ' Who haunt the forest, or who range the plain,
 ' Sleeps where the boughs of yon black cypress wave,
 ' And I am left to languish at her grave!

' To that dear spot, when day's declining beam
 ' Darts from yon shining towers a farewell gleam,
 ' Constant as eve, my sorrows I renew,
 ' And mix my tears with the descending dew,
 ' The last sad debt to buried beauty pay,
 ' Kiss the cold shrine, and clasp the mould'ring clay.

‘ Far other sounds this conscious valley heard,
 ‘ Far other vows these ardent lips preferr’d,
 ‘ When sick with love, and eager to embrace
 ‘ Beauties unrivall’d but by angel grace,
 ‘ I madden’d as I gaz’d o’er all her charms,
 ‘ And hail’d my HINDA to a bridegroom’s arms.
 ‘ I printed on her lips an hasty kiss,
 ‘ The pledge of ardent love and future bliss;
 ‘ Her glowing blushes fann’d the secret fire,
 ‘ Gave life to love, and vigour to desire;
 ‘ Then, when the tear, warm trickling down my cheek,
 ‘ Spoke the full language passion could not speak,
 ‘ Our mutual transport seal’d the nuptial rite,
 ‘ Heav’n witness’d, and approv’d the chaste delight—

“ Prepare, I cried, prepare the nuptial feast,
 “ Bring all the treasures of the rifled East:
 “ The choicest gifts of ev’ry clime explore,
 “ Let * Aden yield her tributary store;

* Aden and Saba are both cities of Arabia Felix, celebrated for the gardens and spicy woods with which they are surrounded.

“ Let

“ Let Saba all her beds of spice unfold,
 “ And Samarcand send gems, and India gold,
 “ To deck a banquet worthy of the bride,
 “ Where mirth shall be the guest, and love preside.

“ Full fifty steeds I boast of swiftest pace,
 “ Fierce in the fight, and foremost in the race.
 “ Slaves too I have, a numerous, faithful band,
 “ And heav’n hath giv’n me wealth with lavish hand :
 “ Yet never have I heap’d an useless store,
 “ Nor spurn’d the needy pilgrim from my door;
 “ And, skill’d alike to wield the crook or sword,
 “ I scorn the mandate of the proudest lord.
 “ O’er my wide vales a thousand camels bound,
 “ A thousand sheep my fertile hills surround;
 “ For her amidst the spicy shrubs they feed,
 “ For her the choicest of the flock shall bleed :
 “ Of polish’d chrystal shall a goblet shine,
 “ The surface mantling with the richest wine;
 “ And on its sides with * Omman’s pearls inlaid,
 “ Full many a tale of love shall be pourtray’d :

* The sea of Omman bounds Arabia on the south, and is celebrated by the Eastern Poets for the beauty of the pearls it produces.

" Hesper shall rise and warn us to be gone,
 " Yet will we revel 'till the breaking dawn;
 " Nor will we heed the morn's unwelcome light,
 " Nor our joys finish with returning night.

" Not Georgia's nymphs can with my love compare,
 " Like jet, the ringlets of her musky hair :
 " Her stature like the palm, her shape the pine,
 " Her breasts like swelling clusters of the vine;
 " Fragrant her breath as Hadramut's perfume,
 " And her cheeks shame the damask rose's bloom.
 " Black, soft, and full, her eyes serenely roll,
 " And seem the liquid mansion of her soul.
 " Who shall describe her lips, where rubies glow,
 " Her teeth like shining drops of purest snow?
 " Beneath her honey'd tongue persuasion lies,
 " And her voice breathes the strains of Paradise.

" A bower I have, where branching almonds spread,
 " Where all the seasons all their bounties shed;
 " The gales of life amidst the branches play,
 " And music bursts from ev'ry vocal spray,
 " Its verdant foot a stream of amber laves,
 " And o'er it Love his guardian banner waves:

‘ There

“ There shall our days, our nights in pleasure glide,
 “ Friendship shall live when passion’s joys subside;
 “ Increasing years improve our mutual truth,
 ‘ And age give sanction to the choice of youth.”

‘ Thus fondly I of fancied raptures sung,
 ‘ And with my song the gladden’d valley rung.
 ‘ But fate, with jealous eye, beheld our joy,
 ‘ Smil’d to deceive, and flatter’d to destroy;
 ‘ Swift as the shades of night the vision fled,
 ‘ Grief was the guest, and death the banquet spread.
 ‘ A burning fever on her vitals prey’d,
 ‘ Defied Love’s efforts, baffled med’cine’s aid,
 ‘ And from these widow’d arms a treasure tore,
 ‘ Beyond the price of empires to restore.

‘ What have I left, what portion but despair,
 ‘ Long days of woe, and nights of endless care?
 ‘ While others live to love, I live to weep;
 ‘ Will sorrow burst the grave’s eternal sleep?
 ‘ Will all my pray’rs the savage tyrant move
 ‘ To quit his prey, and give me back my love?
 ‘ If far, far hence, I take my hasty flight,
 ‘ Seek other haunts, and scenes of soft delight,

' Amidst the crouded mart her voice I hear,
 ' And shed, unseen, the solitary tear;
 ' Music exalts her animating strain,
 ' And beauty rolls her radiant eye in vain:
 ' All that was music fled with Hinda's breath,
 ' And beauty's brightest eyes are clos'd in death!
 ' I pine in darkness for the solar rays,
 ' Yet loath the sun, and sicken at his blaze;
 ' Then curse the light, and curse the lonely gloom;
 ' While unremitting sorrow points the tomb.

' Oh! Hinda, brightest of the black-ey'd maids,
 ' That sport in paradise' embow'ring shades,
 ' From golden boughs where bend ambrosial fruits,
 ' And fragrant waters wash th' immortal roots;
 ' Oh from the bright abodes of purer day,
 ' The prostrate Agib at thy tomb survey;
 ' Behold me with unceasing vigils pine,
 ' My youthful vigour waste with swift decline;
 ' My hollow eye behold, and faded face,
 ' Where health but lately spread her ruddy grace—
 ' I can no more—this fabre sets me free;
 ' This gives me back to rapture, love and thee.

• Firm

- Firm to the stroke its shining edge I bare,
- The lover's last sad solace in despair.
- Go, faithful steel, act ling'ring nature's part,
- Bury thy blushing point within my heart;
- Drink all the life that warms these drooping veins,
- And banish at one stroke a thousand pains.
- Haste thee, dear charmer; catch my gasping breath,
- And cheer with smiles the barren glooms of death!
- 'Tis done—the gates of Paradise expand—
- Attendant Houri seize my trembling hand—
- I pass the dark, inhospitable shore,
- And, Hinda, thou art mine—to part no more.

THE PROSPECT OF LIFE:

A N O D E.

THOU, in whose breast ambitious transports burn,

And ye, who waste the vigour of your age

In fruitless wishes to protract the date,

Assign'd to life by unrelenting fate;

Ah from the scenes of splendid folly turn,

And mark her mirror in this faithful page.

What tho', blind wretch, along her dang'rous tide,

Sportive, the thoughtless and the giddy glide;

Or, led by folly's meteor light astray,

Securely wanton round the verdant shore :

How are they swept by sudden fates away,

Or break like bubbles and are heard no more !

But if thou wilt the untried ocean dare,
 For rougher storms thy shatter'd bark prepare,
 When all thy boasted skill shall fail;
 For many a rock lurks unperceiv'd beneath,
 And know,—creation teems with various death,
 With secret treasures of exhaustless woe,
 That o'er the dearest joys of man prevail,
 And crush the happiness of all below.

Behold the circling elements conspire
 To hurry hapless mortals to the tomb,
 Leagued to destroy, earth, ocean, air, and fire,
 With active violence urge on their doom.
 Deeply convuls'd with thunder's awful sound,
 See the cleft earth disclose her yawning womb,
 And whelm whole empires in the gulph profound!
 Eruptive thro' the midnight air
 Fell comets flash, and vivid lightnings glare,
 Smiting with death the guiltless victim's head,
 Or rushing whirlwinds desolate the plain,
 Where Afric's barren waste expands,
 And caravans, with nations in their train,
 Promiscuous bury in the burning sands.

But who shall ocean's countless wrecks rehearse,
 The myriads weltring on her stormy bed?
 Stupendous tomb of half the human race,
 That sleep unwept by one funereal verse,
 One mournful tear their obsequies to grace!

From scenes of public terror turn thy view;
 Fate's thousand ills in humbler scenes pursue:
 Extend thy glance thro' ev'ry various stage,
 From childhood's follies up to doating age—
 What then is life, but one vast chearless maze,
 Where blinded man in error strays;
 Alternate sport of joy and sorrow,
 To-day triumphant, and oppress'd to-morrow?
 First let thine eye attentive scan
 What nameless woes thy steps await,
 Ere ripening years mature thee into man,
 And darken ev'ry prospect of delight:
 Scarce has the frail inhabitant of clay,
 'Midst toil and danger, struggled into day;
 But infant screams too well declare
 The wretched babe misfortune's fated heir.

Perhaps

Perhaps he falls her early prey,
 And sinks untimely to the grave;
 But if his tender head her fury brave,
 And fate this happiest boon deny,
 A thousand furies hover nigh,
 In hast'ning years, their certain prey to seize:
 A thousand ravening passions ready stand,
 Each with a whip of scorpions in his hand;
 These, with united rage, his bosom sting,
 Blast all his hopes, and poison ev'ry spring
 Whence genuine rapture had begun to flow,
 And spread an universal blank of woe!
 While unassuag'd and piercing pains,
 The monstrous race of pestilent disease,
 Infuriate rush thro' all his throbbing veins,
 To madness ev'ry frantic pulse inflame,
 And writhe with agony his tortur'd frame.
 Then visionary fears his soul affright;
 He sinks in superstition's tenfold night.

 Now let the muse exalt her strain;
 Let martial clangors drown the voice of pain:
 Behold him, now, in life's meridian state,
 When all the syren pleasures round him wait;

His cheeks with health and manly beauty glow,
And valour frowns upon his dauntless brow:

What tho', inflam'd with glory's charms,
He rushes at the trumpet's call to arms,
And gains the shining plume of high renown?

Perhaps, the loftiest summit gain'd,
With ev'ry bold, ambitious wish obtain'd,

He triumphs in his foes o'erthrown,
And boasts the splendors of a ravish'd crown:

Yet soon the glittering phantom flies,
The widow's moan hath pierc'd the skies:
Some fresh usurper rises to confound

His tow'ring pride; and fortune's changeful frown
Tumbles the victim of her vengeance down.

But thus to triumph, thus to fall,
Is not the guilty, glorious lot of all:

Yet ev'ry breast with various passion burns,
And the sad prospect still thro' life returns.

Does science court thee? ah the wish forego,
For added knowledge is but added woe;

Error and doubt distract the schoolman's mind,
Happier, tho' humbler, rests th' untutor'd hind.

In sensual joys you plunge, but plunge in vain,
 No heartfelt pleasures are to these allied ;
 The festive board unseen diseases stain,
 And sorrow floats amidst the crimson tide.
 Does beauty fire thee? know, that sickliest flow'r
 Blooms and expires, the product of an hour!
 Bright, but to perish; blooming, but to fade;
 The loveliest cheek that ever wak'd desire,
 The brightest eye must soon its charms resign;
 Resign at once their lustre and their fire,
 And hide their glories in eternal shade!

But say, do baser transports warm thy soul,
 Ambitious still to swell thy shining store,
 And, mines exhausted, yet athirst for more?
 Take then the utmost wish that soul can frame;
 For thee, her treasures let Pactolus roll,
 For thee, the diamonds of Golconda flame:
 Yet Oh! when death shall lift the threaten'd dart,
 When keen remorse, for all the victims slain
 To satiate thy unbounded thirst for gain,
 Plunges her fiery talon in thy heart;

Will these remorseless Proserpine assuage,
Will these allay the bosom fury's rage?

Ah! why the catalogue of ills prolong,
And swell with complicated woes the song?
Recount those darker moments of despair,

When all the passions, fierce and unconfin'd,
Rush with the tempest's fury on the mind,
And reason, headlong, from her station bear:
When poverty to ev'ry other pang

Adds her keen edge—presents an infant train,
Who with imploring eyes around thee hang,
And raise their suppliant complaints for bread in vain:
Stern fate, perhaps, determin'd to destroy

All that was precious, all thou wish'd to save,
And crush at once the source of ev'ry joy—
Blasts the young consort blooming in thy arms,
Nips in the bud a daughter's op'ning charms,
Or gives thy bosom friend to an untimely grave.

Then, ev'ry source of genuine comfort dead,
Youth's fire extinct, and manhood's vigour fled,
To close the dreary scene, enfeebling age,
With fault'ring foot, and furrow'd front appears,

Jealous,

Jealous, mistrustful, impotent; oppress'd
 With never-ceasing doubts and groundless fears,
 Without one hope to warm the languid breast,
 Thy toil to soften, or thy grief assuage.
 The pow'rs of memory fail; the balls of sight,
 "With dim suffusion veil'd," no more retain
 Their sparkling beams, but shed a doubtful light.
 No more the deafen'd ears can drink the sound
 Of plaintive lute, or softly-warbling lyre:
 The nervous arms no longer dart around
 The brandish'd javelin, or avenging fire.
 Fall'n is their boasted might, and nought remains
 As life's last remnant moments tedious flow,
 But black reserves of unexhausted pains,
 And sad successive scenes of length'ning woe!

VERSES written in the Year 1774.

“ WHAT shouts were those; what fierce and martial train
 “ Rushes to war in yon embattled plain?
 “ Ah whence those flames that brighten all the coast,
 “ And light to vengeance each devoted host?
 “ Oh! scene of guilt, that blots the sick’ning day!
 “ And must a parent’s eyes that scene survey?
 “ My sons, my sons, in impious fight engage,
 “ And brothers madden with forbidden rage.”

Thus from the bosom of th’ Atlantic tide,
 While at her voice th’ obsequious waves divide,
 Slow-rising, Britain’s guardian Genius said;
 And tore th’ eternal laurels from her head.
 Her foot she fix’d upon the rocky steep,
 Where * Boston’s barrier cliffs o’erhang the deep:
 In vain she stretch’d her anxious eyes around,
 To the broad horizon’s remotest bound;

* These rocks are at the entrance of the bay, and are so many and dangerous as to allow only one safe approach to the harbour, through a channel hardly wide enough to admit two ships to sail in abreast.

The smiling fields, the peopled marts to trace
 The happy haunts of her once favour'd race.
 Those fields, those marts, were now a desert grown,
 Their beauty vanish'd, and their pride o'erthrown.
 Instant the warrior flush, that wont to streak
 With glowing crimson her immortal cheek,
 Exchang'd for deadly pale its radiant dies,
 And the keen lightnings languish'd in her eyes;
 The shield of glory trembled in her hand,
 Her spear she dash'd upon the stony strand:
 And as she view'd the desolated plain,
 Pour'd from her bursting heart this plaintive strain.

" Ah, fatal fields! where, erst the chosen band,
 " Fir'd by my voice, and led by freedom's hand,
 " Thro' wild untrodden deserts burst their way,
 " Where yelling savages in ambush play;
 " Where the grim wolf lay dormant in the brake,
 " And vengeance sparkled from the trampled snake—
 " Ah race unworthy those immortal fires,
 " Debas'd their virtues, tho' not quench'd their fires,
 " Ye, who those spears with brother's blood have stain'd;
 " What nights of toil and days of battle gain'd,

" To

" To murd'rous discord have resign'd a prey;
 " And marr'd the toil of ages in a day.
 " Dar'd they, for this, the polar winter's snow;
 " For this, the burning sun's intenser glow?
 " For this did many a hero strew the plain,
 " When * Potowmack ran purple to the main?
 " For this, my Wolfe his life victorious pour,
 " And Braddock perish on a barb'rous shore?
 " Behold, my sons, this wounded breast I bare,
 " Ah cease these streaming wounds afresh to tear!
 " From you they came; and ev'ry hostile dart
 " Drinks my warm life, and rankles at my heart.
 " Sheathe, sheathe your swords; or, if the rage of fight
 " Fill my bold race with such severe delight,
 " (For well I know what martial ardors roll
 " In breasts like yours, and fire the warrior soul)
 " Haste to the fields where fairer glory calls;
 " Haste, hurl your thunder round Havannah's walls.
 " Once more insulting Spain shall flee with dread,
 " And haughty Bourbon bow the stubborn head.

* Potowmack is a considerable river of Virginia, where the first settlers established their colony, after surmounting every obstacle of an unknown country and a savage enemy.

" Inspir'd with dark revenge, and rival hate,
 " They plan destruction for my fav'rite state :
 " Eager to crush a pow'r, their scourge and shame,
 " With hell's dire arts your discords they inflame;
 " 'Till civil torches light them on their way,
 " And hosts resistless seize th' unguarded prey.
 " But shall my Britons, whose exalted name
 " Shines on the bright record of nobler fame ;
 " Shall the bold sons of freedom and the waves,
 " Shrink at the nod of Gaul's imperious slaves ?
 " A race for treacherous arts alone renown'd,
 " Who know of honour nothing save the sound ;
 " But vers'd in flatt'ry, and grimace, and guile,
 " Betray with bows, and murder with a smile :
 " Shall these rule Britons ? First, ye lightnings, sweep
 " These blasted cliffs, and overwhelm them in the deep.

" What tho' no soft luxurious arts ye boast,
 " Rough like your native clime, and rugged coast,
 " Ye glory in the nobler arts of truth,
 " And manlier passions fire your vig'rous youth ;
 " Courage is theirs, and noble thirst of fame,
 " Virtue's strong throb, and honour's virgin flame :

“ These are your bulwark, and when these shall fall,
 “ Britons shall crouch the abject slaves of Gaul.

“ Have ye forgotten Cressy's glorious field,
 “ Where my lov'd Henry rais'd the warrior shield;
 “ Where glory's self his victor armies led,
 “ And with three crowns adorn'd his royal head?
 “ Before him see her glittering standard borne,
 “ Her laurels blasted, and her lilies torn;
 “ See at his feet her captive monarch bow,
 “ And wail the jewels ravish'd from his brow.
 “ Rouze, let rekindling fancy call to view
 “ The coward heaps immortal Marlbro' flew;
 “ His arm but rais'd, opposing hosts retire,
 “ Or seek in death a refuge from his ire.
 “ Methinks I see a train of heroes rise,
 “ Flames in their hands, and terrors in their eyes;
 “ Revenge!” they shout, and tow'rs Havannah's spires
 “ Wave their red arms, and point their hostile fires.

“ Rouze then, my sons, nor heed the fullen roar,
 “ Which jealous faction yells around your shore:
 “ Soon shall the hydra spend her pois'nous breath,
 “ By me dragg'd howling to the gates of death.

“ Once more, in arms united as in mind,
 “ Be firm, and brave the powers of earth combin’d :
 “ Gallia shall shrink aghast, and vaunting Spain
 “ Strive with the mistress of the world in vain.”

She spake ; the lustre to her eye return’d,
 Her cheek with renovated crimson burn’d ;
 Eager she grasp’d th’ unconquerable blade,
 And all the terrors of her shield display’d :
 Then swiftly plung’d in Ocean’s mighty bed,
 And the bright billows sparkled o’er her head.

V E R S E S intended as a P R O L O G U E
 To the TRACHINIANS of SOPHOCLES,
 Performed by the Scholars of the Rev. Mr. PARR, at Stanmore
 in Middlesex.

T H E son of Jove, with anxious qualms oppress'd,
 To soothe the manes of his murder'd guest,
 In willing exile roves to distant climes:
 Strange doctrines these to rogues of modern times;
 Whom scarce stern justice can expel the land,
 Tho' steady Mansfield guide her vengeful hand.
 But what you'll think more strange, he takes his wife,
 To swell the sorrows of his future life.
 As on they journey, silent, pensive, slow,
 Hearts full of grief, and eyes that stream with woe,
 A river stopp'd their course—ye powers divine!
 How could you thwart so pious a design?
 The Hero paus'd, the Lady gave a scream,
 At length appear'd the genius of the stream:
 A huge mishapen clown, with face of brass,
 That well might for an Irish porter pass:
 Nη-Nη-Nησσος,—I think—confound the barb'rous name,
 Like Hercules himself in strength and fame,
 Across his shoulders our fair heroine strode,
 And thus in triumph thro' the billows rode.

One would have thought the waters might assuage
 The monster's heat, and cool his brutish rage ;
 But spite of all, this huge, this ill-form'd wight,
 Dar'd utter words, so rude and unpolite—
 Dar'd offer things—so shocking to be told,
 As made the prudish lady's blood run cold—
 To such a height increas'd his vile desire,
 It rous'd the watchful husband's jealous ire,
 Who, instant as he reach'd th' opposing shore,
 Hurl'd the swift arrow, dipt in pois'nous gore,
 That stopp'd the faithless miscreant in his flight,
 And sent him howling to the shades of night !
 But ere the last pang heav'd his stubborn breast,
 With rage, with anguish, and revenge oppress'd,
 The Centaur thus the trembling dame address'd :
 " If e'er thy husband wander from thy arms,
 " Or gaze with fondness on another's charms ;
 " This vestment sprinkled with my blood, shall prove
 " A pow'rful charm, and bind him to thy love."

Sage counsel ; which our Heroine did not fail
 To ponder well, as mortal flesh is frail—
 Time prov'd her right ; for soon this constant lord,
 So fond, so true, a neighb'ring nymph ador'd ;

And

And while conflicting passions tear her breast,
 She sends her faithless spouse this fatal vest :
 The envenom'd robe his tortur'd sinews fires,
 And the false wretch in dreadful pangs expires.

Ladies, i'faith, these Grecian dames, I ween,
 Were full of ranc'rous spite, and deadly spleen ;
 Our British nymphs, of yore, were somewhat cruel,
 And slew their rival sweethearts in a duel:
 But you, fair virgins, more polite and wise,
 Contented *murder* mortals, *with your eyes*.
 And, if neglectful of his spouse at home,
 In these our days a husband chance to roam;
 The prudent wife such wanton vengeance scorns,
 And decks his temples—with a brace of horns.

T H E S C H O O L - B O Y .

In the Manner of the Splendid Shilling.

TH R I C E happy he, whose hours the chearing smiles
 Of freedom blest; who wantons uncontroul'd
 Where ease invites, or pleasure's syren voice;
 Him the stern tyrant with his iron scourge
 Annoys not, nor the dire oppressive weight
 Of galling chain; but when the blushing morn
 Purples the east, with eager transport wild,
 O'er hill, o'er valley, on his panting steed
 He bounds exulting, as in full career
 With horns, and hounds, and thund'ring shouts he drives
 The flying stag; or when the dusky shades
 Of eve, advancing veil the darkened sky,
 To neighb'ring tavern, blithsome, he resorts
 With boon companion, where they drown their cares
 In sprightly bumpers, and the mantling bowl.

Far otherwise within these darksome walls,
 Whose gates, with rows of triple steel secur'd,
 And many a bolt, prohibit all egress,
 I spend my joyless days; ere dawn appears,

Rous'd from my peaceful slumbers by the sound
 Of awe-inspiring bell, whose every stroke
 Chills my heart-blood, all trembling, I descend
 From dreary garret, round whose ancient roof,
 Gaping with hideous chinks, the whistling blast
 Perpetual raves, and fierce descending rains
 Discharge their fury—Dire, lethargic dews
 Oppress my drowsy sense; still fancy teems
 With fond, ideal joys, and, fir'd with what
 Or Poets sing, or fabled tale records,
 Presents transporting visions; goblets crown'd
 With juice of Nectar, or the food divine
 Of rich Ambrosia, tempting to the sight!
 While in the shade of some embow'ring grove
 I lie reclin'd, or through Elysian plains
 Enraptur'd stray; where ev'ry plant and flower
 Send forth an odorous smell, and all the air
 With songs of love and melody resounds.
 Meanwhile benumbing cold invades my joints,
 As with slow fault'ring footsteps I resort
 To where, of antique mold, a lofty dome
 Rears its tremendous front; here all at once
 From thousand different tongues, a mighty hum
 Assaults my ears; loud as the distant roar

Of tumbling torrents ; or as in some mart
 Of public note, for traffic far renown'd,
 Where Jew with Grecian, Turk with African,
 Asssembled, in one general peal unite
 Of dreadful jargon.—Strait on wooden bench
 I take my seat, and conn with studious care
 Th' appointed tasks ; o'er many a puzzling page
 Poring intent, and sage Athenian bard,
 With dialect, and mood and tense perplex'd ;
 And conjugations varied without end.

When lo ! with haughty stride (in size like him
 Who erst extended on the burning lake,
 Lay floating many a rood ;) his sullen brow,
 With low'ring frowns and fearful glooms o'ercast,
 Enters the Pædagogue ; terrific fight !
 An ample ninefold peruke, spread immense,
 Luxuriant waving down his shoulders plays ;
 His hand a bunch of limber twigs sustains,
 Call'd by the vulgar Birch, tartarean root,
 Whose rankling points, in blackest poison dipt,
 Inflict a mortal pain ; and, where they light,
 A ghastly furrow leave.—Scar'd at the fight,

H

The

The bustling multitude, with anxious hearts,
 Their stations seek.----A solemn pause ensues;
 As when, of old, the monarch of the floods,
 'Midst raging hurricanes, and battling waves,
 Shaking the dreadful Trident, rear'd aloft
 His awful brow.---Sudden the furious winds
 Were hush'd in peace, the billows ceas'd their rage:
 Or when, (if mighty themes, like these, allow
 An humble metaphor) the sportive race
 Of nibbling heroes, bent on wanton play,
 Beneath the shelter of some well-stor'd barn,
 In many an airy circle wheel around;
 Some eye, perchance, in private nook conceal'd,
 Beholds GRIMALKIN; instant they disperse,
 In headlong flight, each to his secret cell;
 If haply he may 'scape impending fate.

Thus ceas'd the gen'ral clamour; all remain
 In silent terror wrapt, and thought profound.

Meanwhile, the Pædagogue throughout the dome
 His fiery eyeballs, like two blazing stars,
 Portentous rolls, on some unthinking wretch,
 To shed their baleful influence; whilst his voice
 Like thunder, or the cannon's sudden burst,

Three times is heard, and thrice the roofs resound !
 A sudden paleness gathers in my face ;
 Through all my limbs a stiff'ning horror spreads,
 Cold as the dews of death, nor heed my eyes
 Their wonted function, but in stupid gaze
 Ken the fell monster; from my trembling hands
 The thumb-worn volume drops; oh dire presage
 Of instant woe! for now the mighty sound
 Pregnant with dismal tidings, once again
 Strikes my astonish'd ears. Transfix'd with awe,
 And senseless, for a time, I stand; but soon,
 By friendly jog, or neighb'ring whisper rous'd,
 Obey the dire injunction; strait I loose
 Depending brogues, and mount the lofty throne
 Indignant, or the back oblique ascend
 Of sorrowful compeer; nor long delays
 The Monarch, from his palace stalking down,
 With visage all inflam'd; his sable robe
 Sweeping in length'ning folds along the ground :
 He shakes his sceptre, and the impending scourge
 Brandishes high; nor tears nor shrieks avail;
 But with impetuous fury it descends,
 Imprinting horrid wounds, with fatal flow
 Of blood attended, and convulsive pangs.

Curst be the wretch, for ever doom'd to bear
 Infernal whippings; he, whose savage hands
 First grasp'd these barbarous weapons, bitter cause
 Of foul disgrace, and many a dolorous groan,
 To hapless school-boy.—Could it not suffice
 I groan'd and toil'd beneath the merc'less weight,
 By stern relentless tyranny impos'd,
 But scourges too, and cudgels were reserv'd
 To goad my harrow'd sides: This wretched life
 Loading with heavier ills; a life expos'd
 To all the woes of hunger, toil, distress;
 Cut off from ev'ry genial source of bliss;
 From ev'ry bland amusement, wont to soothe
 The youthful breast; except when father Time,
 In joyful change, rolls round the festive hour,
 That gives this meagre, pining figure, back
 To parent fondness, and its native roofs.
 Fir'd with the thought, then, then my tow'ring soul
 Rises superior to its load, and spurns
 Its proud oppressors; frantic with delight,
 My fancy riots in successive scenes
 Of bliss and pleasures: plans and schemes are laid
 How best the fleeting moments to improve,
 Nor lose one portion of so rare a boon.

But soon, too soon, these glorious scenes are fled,
 Scarce one short moon enjoy'd, (oh! transient state
 Of sublunary bliss) by bitter change,
 And other scenes succeeded, what fierce pangs
 Then rack my soul; what ceaseless floods of grief,
 Rush down my cheeks, while strong convulsive throbs
 Heave all my frame, and choak the power of speech.
 Forlorn I sigh, nor heed the gentle voice
 Of friend or stranger, who, with soothing words,
 And slender gift, would fain beguile my woes:
 In vain; for what can aught avail to soothe
 Such raging anguish! Oft with sudden glance
 Before my eyes in all its horrors glares
 That well-known form, and oft I seem to hear
 The thund'ring scourge—Ah me! e'en now I feel
 Its deadly venom, raging as the pangs
 That tore Alcides, when the burning vest
 Prey'd on his wasted sides.—At length return'd
 Within these hated walls, again I mourn
 A fullen pris'ner, 'till the wish'd approach
 Of joyous holiday or festive play
 Releases me: ah! freedom that must end
 With thee, declining Sol; all hail, ye fires
 For sanctity renown'd, whose glorious names

In

In large conspicuous characters pourtray'd,
 Adorn the annual chronologic page
 Of Wing or Partridge; oft when sore oppress'd
 With dire calamities, the glad return
 Of your triumphant festivals, hath cheer'd
 My drooping soul; nor be thy name forgot,
 Illustrious George, for much to thee I owe
 Of heart-felt rapture, as with loyal zeal
 Glowing, I pile the crackling bonfire high,
 Or hurl the mounting rocket thro' the air,
 Or fiery whizzing serpent; thus thy name
 Shall still be honour'd, as thro' future years
 The circling seasons roll their festive round!

Sometimes, by dire compulsive hunger press'd,
 I spring the neighb'ring fence, and scale the trunk
 Of apple-tree; or wide, o'er flow'ry lawns,
 By hedge or thicket, bend my hasty steps,
 Intent, with secret ambush, to surprize
 The straw-built nest, and unsuspecting brood
 Of Thrush or Bullfinch; oft with watchful ken
 Eyeing the backward lawns, lest hostile glance
 Observe my footsteps, while each rustling leaf,
 Stirr'd by the gentle gale, alarms my fears:

Then,

Then, parch'd beneath the burning heats of noon,
 I plunge into the limpid stream, that laves
 The silent vale, or on its grassy banks
 Beneath some oak's majestic shade, recline;
 Envy the vagrant fishes, as they pass
 Their boon of freedom; 'till the distant sound
 Of tolling Curfew warns me to depart.

Thus under tyrant power I groan, oppress'd
 With worse than slavery; yet my free-born soul
 Her native warmth forgets not, nor will brook
 Menace or taunt from proud insulting peer:
 But summons to the field the doughty foe
 In single combat, 'midst th' impartial throng,
 There to decide our fate. Oft too-enflam'd
 With mutual rage, two rival armies meet
 Of youthful warriors; kindling at the sight,
 My soul is fill'd with vast heroic thoughts,
 Trusting, in martial glory, to surpass
 Roman or Grecian chief; instant, with shouts
 The mingling squadrons join the horrid fray;
 No need of cannon, or the murd'rous steel,
 Wide-wasting; nature, rage our arms supplies.
 Fragments of rocks are hurl'd, and showers of stones

Obscure the day ; nor less the brawny arm,
 Or knotted club avail : high in the midst
 Are seen the mighty Chiefs, thro' hosts of foes
 Mowing their way ; and now, with tenfold rage,
 The combat burns, full many a sanguine stream
 Distains the field, and many a veteran brave
 Lies prostrate ; loud triumphant shouts ascend
 By turns from either host ; each claims the palm
 Of glorious conquest ; nor till night's dun shades
 Involve the sky, the doubtful conflict ends.

Thus when rebellion shook the thrones of heav'n,
 And all th' eternal powers in battle met,
 High o'er the rest, with vast gigantic strides,
 The godlike leaders, on th' embattled plain,
 Came tow'ring, breathing forth revenge and fate ;
 Nor less terrific join'd the inferior hosts
 Of angel warriors, when encount'ring hills,
 Tore the rent concave,—flashing with the blaze
 Of fiery arms, and lightnings, not of Jove ;
 All heav'n refounded, and th' astonish'd deeps
 Of chaos bellow'd with the monstrous roar.

T H E O X O N I A N.

PARENT of light and song, whatever name,
 Phœbus, or Mithras, more delight thine ear;
 The Muse, with rapture, hails thy rising beams,
 Burst from her drear confinement, where the hand
 Of vaunting tyranny repress'd her rage,
 And damp'd her flagging wing, now borne aloft
 To milder regions, and more genial soils.

No more the Pædagogue, with brandish'd rod,
 Annoys my sides, nor stuns with deathful sounds
 My startled ears; for now, with transport heard,
 The joyful mandate summons me away,
 To where fam'd Isis rolls her laureate wave;
 On whose gay banks an ancient city stands,
 Crown'd with an hundred spires, and swelling domes
 Modern, or Gothic, stately to the view:
 Hither, 'tis said, from Athens' widow'd bow'rs
 By Persian pride and civil rage expell'd,
 Dame Wisdom fled of yore, and with her came,

Leaving the fabled haunts of Castaly,
 Nine beauteous maids, who boast their birth from Jove :
 High on these pinnacles enthron'd they reign,
 * " To us invisible, or dimly seen,"
 Except by soaring fancy's keener glance.
 Around their shrines, from Britain's farthest bound,
 Array'd in fables, croud a motley race ;
 Distinct with various titles, and degrees
 As various—high above the rest appear
 Two forms of more majestic port and mien,
 Whose sovereign rule the toga'd race obey,
 Hight *Proctors* ; by their sleeves of ominous sweep,
 Of Genoa's looms the fam'd produce, well known,
 And dreaded ; these in order next, and next
 In dignity, a tribe of sages stand,
 Dreadful with *Tippet*, source of dire dismay
 To Freshmen, and the whole unbearded race ;
 Their office to support and poise the scale
 Of steady justice, from the peaceful shades
 Of science to repel the barbarous sons
 Of insolence, and faction's wild uproar ;
 Nor are there wanting, who, with ponderous mace,

* Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

May add to mild reproofs vindictive blows,
Full often rued by many a heedless wight.

But now array'd in like mysterious stole,
With flowing band, that faintly ornament,
Hung waving from my chin, I issue forth
To seek the mansion of a learned sage,
Y'clep'd a Tutor; him aloof I ken,
On elbows twain of antient chair reclin'd,
With cobwebs hung, by time's sharp tooth defac'd,
Midst volumes pil'd on volumes all around,
And dusty manuscripts; treasures I ween
Of antient lore: He fullen from his chair
Reclines not, 'till with many an aukward bow
And strain right humble I implore his grace.
Questions the sage proposes, dark, perplex'd;
Of various import—and to sound my skill
O'er many an author turns, to me well known,
Virgil or Horace, or the dreadful page
Of Homer, name accurst—descending hence
His steps at awful distance I pursue,
Admiring much my strange unwonted garb,
And wond'rous head-piece; till at length we reach
The mansion of a venerable Seer,

Second alone of all the letter'd race,
 Who opes a mighty volume, graced with rows
 Of various names, in seemly order rang'd;
 'Midst these the humblest of the muse's train
 Enrolls his name: and Isis hails her son.
 Some mystic sounds pronounc'd, with trembling lips
 The sacred page I kiss, and from his hand
 A book receive, of small regard to fee,
 With godly counsels fraught, and wholesome rules;
 Which ill betide the wight who dares offend.
 The wonted fees discharg'd, I haste away
 To join the circle of my old compeers,
 Sever'd by cruel fate—The hearty shake,
 The friendly welcome, go alternate round:
 And that blest day, 'till eve's remotest hour,
 Is sacred to our joys—Its choicest stores
 The genial larder opes; exhausted deep,
 Even to its inmost hoards, the buttery groans.
 But now the bottle rolls its ample round,
 Kindling to rapture each congenial soul;
 The lust of merriment, the joyous catch
 Ring round the roofs incessant—much is talk'd
 Of past exploits, and grievous tasks impos'd
 By former tyrants; tyrants now no more.

Transported with the thought, in frantic joy
 I raise my arm, and 'midst surrounding shouts,
 Quaff the full bumper; ah *full* dearly rued!
 Stern fortune, thus ev'n in the cup of bliss
 To mix the dregs of woe—a deadly hue
 Sudden invests my cheeks, my fainting soul
 Is fill'd with horrid loathings and strange pangs,
 Unfelt before, convulsing all my frame:
 Med'cines are vain, or serve but to augment
 My grievous plight, 'till some experienc'd friend
 Lead me to neighb'ring couch, where grateful sleep
 Soon o'er my senses sheds her opiate balm.

Heard with less terror, now, the tolling bell
 Summons my footsteps to that awful dome,
 Whose gaudy windows, all superbly dight
 With various tints, and quaint historic lore,
 Tempt from devotion's page the roving eye—
 Myst'rious studies next my thoughts employ;
 Figures and lines, with nicest art to range,
 Oblique or square, and time, and mode, and space,
 Perplex my brains—Now logic, rugged maid,
 Opens her stores profound, the wavering mind
 To fix aright, and guide the excentric thought:

Sage doctrines, nathless unrestrain'd I rove
 At large, and riot in successive rounds
 Of new delight : Now up the silver stream
 To Medley's bowers, or Godstowe's fam'd retreat,
 Straining each nerve, I urge the dancing skiff;
 Or, rushing headlong down the perilous steep,
 Rouze the fly Reynard from his dark abode :
 Or, if inclement vapours load the sky,
 Tennis awhile the heavy hours beguiles ;
 Or, at the billiards fatal board, I stake
 With anxious heart, the last sad remnant coin.

Tutors may chide, and angry fires withhold
 The wonted largesse, their united rage
 I wreck not ; * Ticking, gentlest maid, supports
 My sinking fame, and all my woes beguiles.
 O fairer far than all that Greece, or Rome,
 In vaunting strain, of nymph or goddess tell ;
 To thee a thousand temples pierce the skies :
 To thee a thousand altars ever smoke :
 Great queen of *Arts*, without whose chearing ray,

* Hail, Ticking ! guardian of distress—

Science would droop, and genius must expire.
 Raising one general pray'r, of every rank
 Unnumber'd suppliants throng thy crouded courts.
 To thee, the haughty doctor, rais'd on high
 To learning's loftiest seats, tho' far renown'd,
 Cringes submissive; thee with all his arts
 The subtle lawyer seeks, nor heeds the voice
 Of bailiff thundering at his neighbour's gates.
 Propitious power, my lyre shall still be strung
 To sing thy praise, my pencil still prepar'd
 To paint thy charms—and well they may, I ween,
 For thine the pencil is, and thine the lyre !

Whether the grape's rich juice regales my soul,
 Or from the potent bowl I quaff new life,
 Abhorrent still, I loath the nauseous fumes
 Of that detested weed, *Virginia* hight,
 Which the sage Don, in spiral clouds exhales,
 Frequent and full, as o'er his drowsy malt
 Gravely he nods—Be mine that milder leaf
 Which Rowley's patriot hand, with studious care,
 From hill, or wood, or flowery vale selects:
 Cheer'd with its genial vapours oft I lounge

Beneath the matron's * roofs, or thine, O Kemp;
 Mistaken patriot, as, in high debate,
 Of British freedom, and of British herb,
 We reason much, nor weightier thoughts employ
 My tranquil mind, but how the mantling bowl
 With sweet, with sour, with spirit rightly mix'd,
 May be replenish'd; oft by these inspir'd
 From street to street, beneath the moon's pale beam,
 Heedless I stray, if haply *Proctor's* voice
 Check not my progress—*Siste*—deathful sound,
 “What † should I do, or whither turn—amaz'd,
 Confounded,” down some narrow lane I cower
 Of fam'd St. Thomas, virtue's chaste retreat:
 But vain my flight, for ruffian's cruel palms
 Arrest my steps, and to the offended power
 Force me reluctant—he aloud exclaims
 Of broken faith, and violated laws,
 Full many a tale he adds, of deep import,
 And then with mandate stern, to college dooms
 Me, hapless wight, with dreadful fines amers'd,

“* Matron of Matrons, Martha Baggs.”

OXFORD SAUSAGE.

† The Splendid Shilling.

Till

Till one long moon revolves her tedious round :
 Some godly author, Tillotson perchance,
 Or moral bard to conn, with heart full sad.
 There long I sigh unfriended, and alone,
 Unless some dun ascend my lofty dome,
 At first with gentle foot, and suppliant voice,
 But oft denied, and bolder grown, he adds
 Vindictive menace, and before my eyes
 Displays the horrors of that antient fort *,
 Drear mansion, where the fallen debtor pines,
 'Midst circling gloom, and hunger's cruel rage :
 While restless fancy to my sight presents
 That dreaded volume †, whose recording page
 Brands, with eternal infamy, the wretch,
 Incorrigible deem'd, whom dire misdeeds
 Of darker stain disgrace : me Phœbus flies,
 And all the tuneful nine, tho' oft I try
 With feeble nerve to string my useless lyre—

* The castle of Oxford, erected by Robert D'Oilie, A. D. 1071, now converted into the county gaol.—The story is well known of a descendant of this founder, who being asked how he came into that place, replied, “by right of inheritance.”

† Vulgo dictum, the Black Book, in which, if any member of the university has the misfortune to have his name enrolled, he is totally excluded from attaining any privilege, or taking his degree.

The time elaps'd, with throbbing heart I seek
 The dreaded fear, and to his hand present
 The letter'd page; with brow austere he reads
 And bids me, from experience wise, beware
 To rouse, a second time, his sleeping ire—

Thrice happy sons of *Cam*, whom *Proctor's* rage
 Rarely molests, whether your snorting steeds
 Snuff from afar Newmarket's well known breeze;
 Or furious pant to gain the verdant heights
 Of * Gog-magog—O skill'd with dexterous hand
 To smack the thong, and guide the aerial car;
 By * Trompington's or * Barnwell's blooming dames,
 Kenn'd with amaze: How does each Isis beau
 Envy your lot!—Slaves to no servile laws,
 That pinion down their fancy, you disport:
 In gaudy filks, and various tinctur'd vests,
 Best snares for female hearts; our humbler garbs
 Subfusc, or sable, scarcely tempt the glance
 Of wishful nymph, tho' many a nymph we boast,
 As blithe, as blooming, and as bright as your's—

Why should the muse of direr evils sing,
 When *Rustication*, in her harpy fangs,

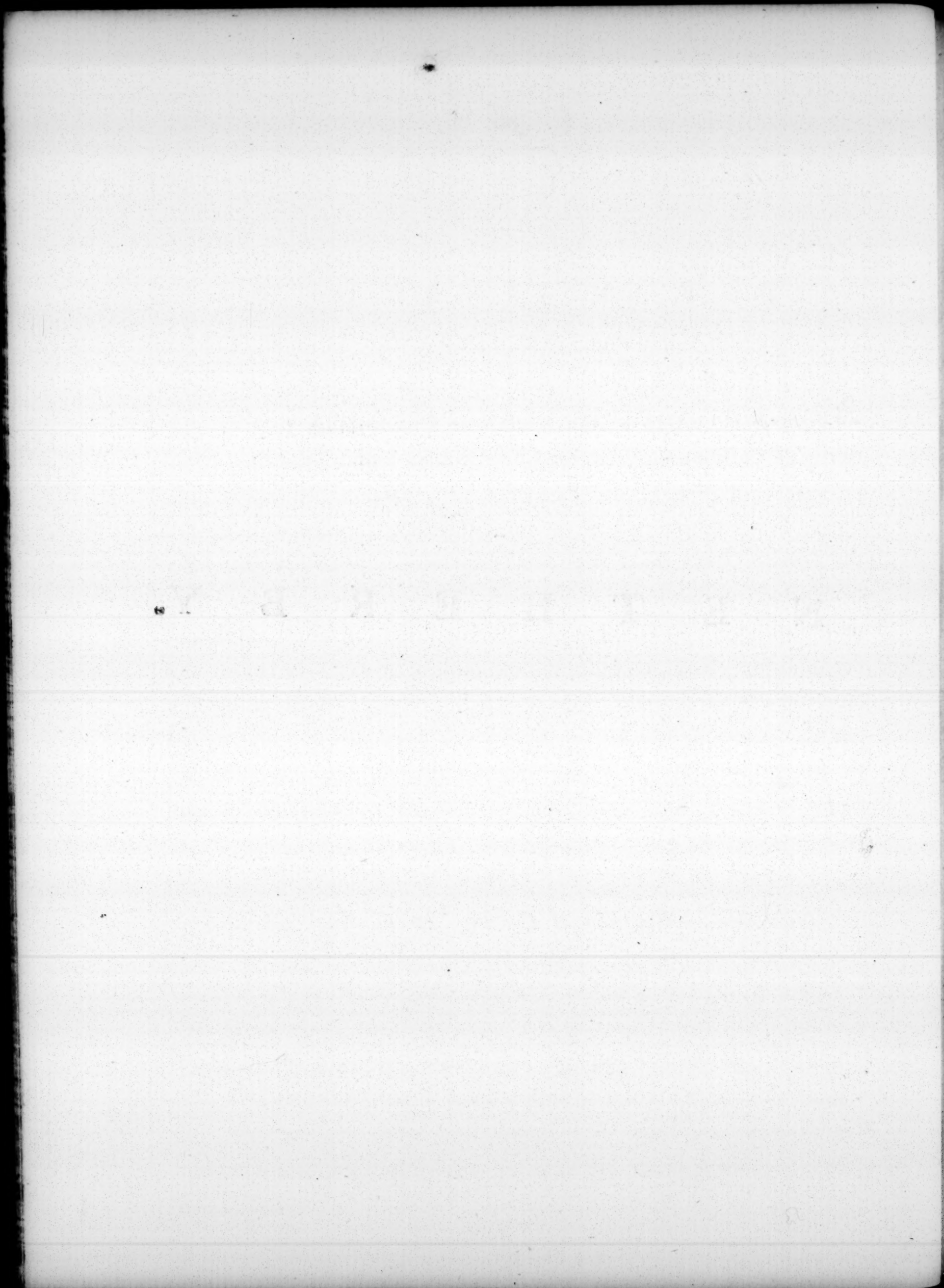
* Places well known at Cambridge.

Hurries the wretch, from joy and Isis far,
 In sylvan solitudes to waste his youth,
 'Midst chiding aunts, and antiquated maids ?
 Or why, that last sad fate the wretched prove,
 Exil'd for ever from her sacred haunts,
 To roam, like Adam, thro' the desert earth,
 " * With all the world before them, where to choose
 " Their place of rest," yet after all find none.
 Spurning each youthful folly, wiser I
 Ascend, with graduate splendor, to the heights
 Of classic dignity ; in time perchance
 May wield the fasces of *proetorial* power,
 And be myself that Don, so lately fear'd.

* Milton's Paradise Lost.

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N E T H E R B Y.



P R E F A C E.

Netherby is situated on the borders of Cumberland, twelve miles north of Carlisle; and was formerly a Roman station: the *Castra Exploratorum* of Antoninus. From the many valuable remains of antiquity, continually found on, or near, this spot, it is conjectured that the famous *Æsica* stood not far distant; especially as the river Esk, from which its name is derived, runs through these grounds. The perpetual feuds that subsisted on the borders, between the English and Scots, before the Union of the two nations, with the particular circumstance of the *debateable land*, which, at present, makes a part of the estate; the eruption of *Solway Moss* which happened in 1771; added to the present improved and beautiful state of *Netherby*, afforded ample room for luxuriant description, and the wantonness of a poetical imagination.

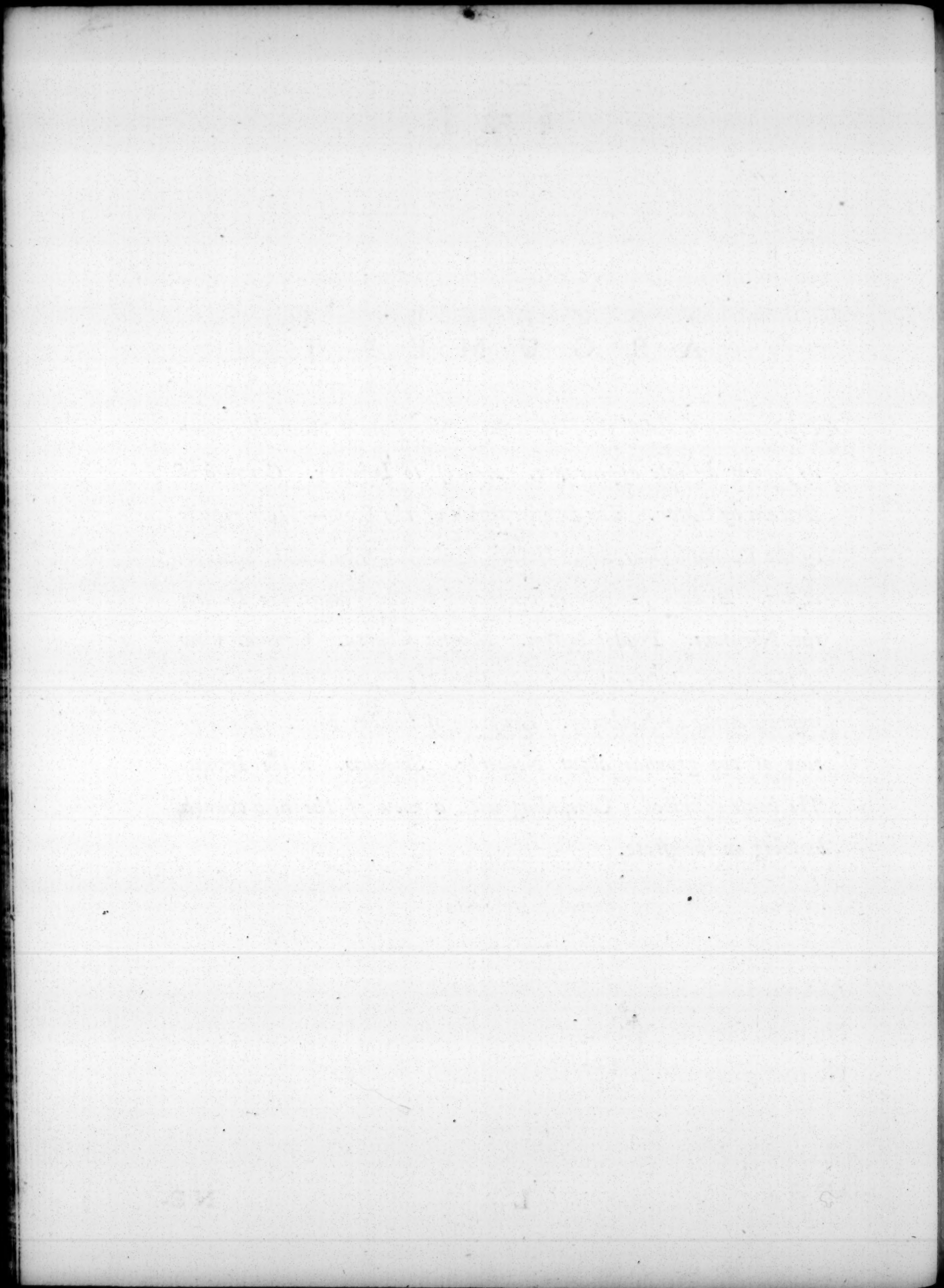
“ *Netherby*—The seat of the Rev. Dr. Graham, placed on a
 “ rising ground, washed by the Esk, and commanding an extensive
 “ view; more pleasing to Dr. Graham, as he sees from it a creation
 “ of his own; lands that eighteen years ago were in a state of na-
 “ ture, the people idle and bad, still retaining a smack of the feudal
 “ manners: scarce a hedge to be seen: and a total ignorance prevailed
 “ of even coal and lime. His improving spirit soon wrought a great
 “ change in these parts: his example instilled into the inhabitants an
 “ inclination”

“ inclination to industry : and they soon found the difference between
 “ sloth and its concomitants, dirt and beggary, and the plenty that a
 “ right application of the arts of husbandry brought among them.
 “ They lay in the midst of a rich country, yet starved in it : but in
 “ a small space they found that instead of a produce that hardly sup-
 “ ported themselves, they were enabled to raise even supplies for their
 “ neighbours : that much of their land was so kindly as to bear corn
 “ for many years successively, without help of manure, and for the
 “ more ungrateful soils, that there were limestones to be had and
 “ coal to burn them.—The wild tract soon appeared in form of
 “ verdant meadows and fruitful corn-fields : from the first, they were
 “ soon able to send to distant places, cattle and butter : and their
 “ arable lands enabled them to maintain a commerce as far as Lan-
 “ cashire in corn.

“ *By* signifies a habitation ; thus, there are three camps or stations,
 “ with this termination, not very remote from one another ; Netherby,
 “ Middleby, and Overby.” Mr. Pennant’s Tour in Scotland.
 Vol. II. p. 64.

A R G U M E N T.

A comparative view of the present flourishing state of Netherby, with its former desolate appearance. Address to Industry. Conquest of Britain by Cæsar. The first irruption of the Scots—Their repulse by the Roman legions, under Julius Agricola. The wall of Severus. Æsica. Britain successively conquered by the Saxons, the Danes, the Normans. Feudal System. Magna Charta. General view of the borders, before the Union—After the Union. The particular improvements at Netherby. Eruption of Solway Moss. Description of the grounds about Netherby. Skiddaw. Ellen Irvine. The house described. Concluding with a view of the new church building on the estate.



N E T H E R B Y.

ARE these the regions, where, from age to age,
 Contending nations strove, with mutual rage;
 Her barren wing, where brooding famine spread;
 And frantic faction rear'd her ghastly head?
 How chang'd the scene—what glorious prospects rise;
 Where-e'er around I turn my wond'ring eyes!
 Here guardian peace, here smiling culture reigns,
 And endless plenty cloaths the fertile plains.
 Yon stream * that, erst, impurpled with the slain,
 In many a sanguine billow fought the main,
 Now guiltless rolls, and views, with conscious pride,
 Luxuriant landscapes glitter on her side;
 A thousand hills with wealth and verdure crown'd,
 And vales in rich profusion smiling round.
 No more they ring with battles fierce alarms,
 No trumpets early clangors rouse to arms;

* The Esk.

Echoes of rapture, now, alone, they hear,
 The ploughman's whistle, or the sportsman's cheer—
 What tho' bleak Boreas oft deform the day,
 Or frequent storms obscure the genial ray,
 Th' industrious swain, with firm, undaunted soul,
 Contemns his rage, and bids the tempest roll :
 Mark, how serene, his honest front defies
 The wildest fury of the beating skies :
 Still as the shining share the furrow turns,
 His bosom with rekindled ardour burns ;
 By long experience taught, the grateful soil,
 With interest, will repay his useful toil.

Hail Industry, rough virtue's hardy child ;
 Whose smiling presence cheers the lonely wild :
 At thy kind touch the rock, relenting, blooms,
 And Eden springs, 'midst Lapland's frozen glooms.
 The rapid river, rolling in its course,
 Thy hand arrests, and curbs its headlong force ;
 The swelling deep's tumultuous fury bounds,
 And chains its waves with everlasting mounds.
 Empires and states to thee their greatness owe,
 From thee their wealth, their power, their splendor flow ;

Rising

Rising in glory, as they court thy sway,
By thee they flourish, and with thee decay.

Long had the mighty Roman Victor hurl'd
Slaughter and rapine o'er the wasted world :
Unconquer'd yet, remote, Britannia stood
Safe 'midst her native cliffs, and guardian flood.
He mark'd the dangers of her stormy shore,
He heard the breaking waves eternal roar ;
But, flush'd with conquest, his undaunted mind
Brav'd all the rage of seas and storms combin'd.
In vain, the savages his arms oppose,
His legions burst their way thro' hosts of foes ;
Her rocks they scale, her trackless desarts pierce,
They tame her monsters, and her sons, more fierce.
Swift o'er the land the Roman arts increase,
And culture triumphs, with returning peace :
With sudden verdure, lo ! the valleys smile,
And rising plenty crowns the blooming isle.

Far to the North, beyond where Tweed's fair pride,
Thro' velvet meadows rolls her amber tide ;
Or Cumbria's lofty mountains, rising round,
Of ancient Britain, form'd th' extended bound :

There dwelt a race, inur'd to want and toil,
 The sons of Caledonia's desert soil;
 These view'd the neighb'ring state, with jealous eyes,
 And rush'd, exulting, on the beauteous prize.
 They pour'd their armies o'er the fertile plain,
 Tore ev'ry fence, and reap'd the untimely grain :
 The Britons shrink, unequal, from the fight,
 And bend, to distant fields, their hasty flight.
 Nought can withstand the fell barbarian's rage,
 Nor tears nor shrieks their savage souls assuage,
 Nor sex, nor age, their murd'rous weapons spare,
 Nor from the temples holy shrines forbear ;
 With impious hand, they quench the hallow'd fire ;
 While the sage Druids, 'midst their rites, expire.

To quell their pride, th' imperial bards advance,
 Their myriads crouch beneath the Roman lance ;
 Aloft the victor-hoofs * their flag display,
 The British youth, with joy, the sign obey ;
 On the proud foe the vengeful blow returns,
 While every breast with great resentment burns :

* The General who finally established the dominion of the Romans in this island was Julius Agricola ; who governed it in the reigns of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. He carried his victorious arms to the most northern extremity of it, and pierced into the remote forests and mountains of Caledonia, which were before deemed inaccessible.

Onward they rush, like some resistless flood,
 And deluge all his wasted realms with blood—
 His rocks, his mountains, every desert heath,
 Responsive echo to the shrieks of death!
 Thus, full aveng'd, the swains, with anxious care,
 The trampled fence and mural breach repair;
 Their friendly aid the generous Romans lend;
 Their new allies from rapine to defend:
 And lo, a mighty rampart * rears its head;
 While nations triumph in its guardian shade;
 Winding o'er hill and vale, from Solway's shores,
 To where the Tyne his distant current pours:
 The lofty tow'rs with shining warriors blaze,
 Whose helmets glitter with the morning rays:
 Dauntless they stand, and stretch the sounding bow,
 And dart swift vengeance on the distant foe.
 Then flourish'd thy fair pride, illustrious town †;
 Tho' fate hath dash'd thy gilded temples down!
 What tho' thy beauteous turrets beam'd on high,
 And thy strong bulwarks tower'd amidst the sky;
 Not all thy strength, nor beauty, could withstand
 Faction's fell rage, nor stop the plunderer's hand.

* The wall of Severus, extending from Bullnesh on the Solway Firth quite across the kingdom to Newcastle.

† Ælica. See Camden's Britannia.

The seat of heroes, gen'rous, rough and bold,
 Oft thro' thy gates the tide of battle roll'd—
 Methinks I hear the rattling chariot bound,
 And the bold steed impatient paw the ground;
 Monarchs and chiefs, the glory of mankind,
 Beneath thy domes, their laurel'd heads reclin'd;
 Like them, shall flourish thy immortal name,
 Partake their honours, and enjoy their fame.
 The lab'ring hind, as o'er these hallow'd plains,
 (Where rest intomb'd thy grandeur's proud remains,)
 He guides the share, beholds, with wild surprize,
 Helmets and spears, of wond'rous make and size;
 * Urns, altars, statues, which strange sculptures grace,
 And fondly strives the mystic lore to trace;
 From mould'ring coins the sacred rust he clears,
 And mars the labour of a thousand years.
 Pleas'd some great prince or hero to behold,
 But more delighted with the glitt'ning gold.

Queen of the world, at length, majestic Rome
 Beheld, and trembled at her hast'ning doom;
 Oppress'd with grandeur's vast incumbent weight,
 The senate scarce upheld the sinking state;

* The reader will find, in Mr. Pennant, a particular account of all the curiosities at Netherby, with engravings of the principal.

Her pamper'd sons, unlike their valiant fires,
 Retain no patriot rage, no martial fires;
 On beds of filk they waste the tedious day,
 Or feebly trill the soft, unmanly lay.
 Unable to repel the barbarous hosts,
 That pour'd their fury on her plunder'd coasts,
 She calls her bravest sons from ev'ry shore,
 In black'ning swarms the distant legions pour,
 From burning realms, where southern deeps resound,
 From Britain's coasts, from Asia's farthest bound:
 While vengeance o'er the imperial city lours,
 And frantic discord shakes her hundred towers.
 The drooping Britons, seiz'd with equal dread,
 Beheld their brave allies and conquerors fled,
 The guardians of their state; nor vain their fears,
 High on the wall the insulting Scot appears:
 Furious from native courage, and despair,
 The fierceness of his rage, awhile they dare;
 But broke and routed by superior force,
 To distant plains, once more, they bend their course:
 The shouting foe pursues, with barbarous rage,
 And the fierce hosts eternal conflict wage;
 Till Britain's loftiest hills, alone, afford,
 Her offspring refuge from the murd'rous sword.

M

But

But now, imperial Rome in ashes laid,
 Her laurels blasted, and her strength decay'd;
 Germania's veteran bands, in war renown'd,
 With terror aw'd the wond'ring nations round:
 Hengist and Horfa, chiefs of mightier name,
 Shone foremost on the bright record of fame;
 Like gods, they tower'd amidst the sons of earth,
 As from those powers * they trac'd their vaunted birth.
 To these brave chiefs the Britons turn their eyes,
 On them alone their last fond hope relies:
 The hero comes; but not, with vengeful hand,
 From rapine's grasp to wrest the bleeding land;
 With their triumphant foes their faithless train,
 In barbarous league, they join, and rivet every chain.

In vain the Druid smites the magic string,
 In vain the rocks with choral warblings ring;
 Tho' oft Britannia rais'd her feeble shield,
 Tho' oft their bravest veterans strew'd the field;
 Tho' Horfa's self, descended from the skies,
 Pour'd forth his life, a glorious sacrifice,

* They were reputed to be descended from their god Woden.

Beneath a Briton's spear—yet still, in vain,
 She strove her ravish'd honours to regain;
 Resistless Hengist thunder'd round the land,
 And tore the sceptre from her trembling hand;
 At length she sunk beneath the galling yoke,
 Her rage extinct, her martial spirit broke;
 Pale, at his feet, her prostrate genius lay,
 While slaughter mark'd the victor's crimson way.

The Saxon triumph'd, till the fiercer Dane,
 In pomp, advancing o'er the whitening main,
 Rear'd his insulting Raven * on her shore,
 And swell'd her rivers with unusual gore;
 Where-e'er he treads, the furies howl around,
 While his fell footsteps blast the with'ring ground:
 Both yield, at length, to William's conquering sword,
 And harra's'd Britain own'd a *Norman* lord.
 Why should the muse of feudal power relate,
 The haughty lord's, or humbler vassal's fate;

* The famous Reafen, or enchanted standard, is here alluded to, in which the Danes put great confidence. It contained the figure of a raven, which had been inwove by the three sisters of Hingua and Hubba with many magical incantations, the flappings of whose wings was regarded as the certain presage of victory.

How petty Kings each others realms invade,
 By turns, are murder'd, conquer'd, or betray'd?
 Their fame, their fortunes, she disdains to sing;
 Oblivion shade them with thy dusky wing.
 With joy she hastens to that happier age,
 In which, superior to oppression's rage,
 The firm, undaunted barons, dar'd withstand
 A tyrant's frown, and check'd his guilty hand:
 When Justice darted from the radiant sky,
 When vengeance wav'd her flaming sword on high;
 When rising freedom dawn'd upon our isle,
 And cheer'd the nation with her roseate smile:
 When laws, which time nor tyrants shall efface,
 Founded on wisdom's and on virtue's base,
 Of this wide empire form'd the mighty bound;
 The pride, the wonder of the nations round!
 Then culture rais'd once more her drooping head,
 And arts, that lay in long oblivion dead,
 Sprang to new life—then commerce gave her sail,
 With swelling pomp to flutter in the gale;
 Our navies sail'd to many a distant shore,
 That now first heard the British lion roar—
 The peaceful swain securely turn'd the soil,
 And reap'd, secure, the produce of his toil:

In one firm league the various nations join,
 Lost, undistinguish'd, in the English line;
 All but the haughty Scot—whose stubborn soul *
 Nor Henry's † conquering squadrons could controul,
 Nor fiercer Edward‡; tho' such heaps of slain,
 Expiring, groan'd on Falkirk's fatal plain;
 And blasted by malignant fortune's frown,
 The captive Baliol wail'd his plunder'd crown.
 Wide o'er the borders rang'd a savage band,
 That scatter'd flames and ravage round the land:
 Where-e'er fair culture's beauteous hand was seen,
 Their savage footsteps crush'd the rising green;
 And ev'ry flower that blossom'd on the mead,
 Shrunk from their rage, and droop'd its wither'd head.

What gloomy prospects open on my eyes!
 On every side, what scenes of horror rise!

* The Author is very far from meaning by this, or any other expression that may occur in this Poem, to revive any idea of former animosities between two nations at present so happily united under one head. What he has written, is in conformity to the truth of history, and is by no means intended as a reflection on a people who are distinguished by their liberal hospitality to strangers, as the Author has experienced; who is happy in this opportunity of expressing his grateful acknowledgments.

† Henry I.

‡ Edward I. who, at the battle of Falkirk, entirely routed and put to flight the whole Scottish army. Some historians make the loss of the Scots amount to fifty or sixty thousand men; certain it is they never suffered a greater loss, or one that seemed to threaten more inevitable ruin to their country.

I see

I see each beauteous vale with weeds o'erspread;
 The fields neglected, and their owners fled;
 Scarce can the pining natives, that remain,
 By wretched arts their wretched lives sustain:
 Nor branching tree, nor verdant hedge appears,
 Nor voice, nor sound, the lonely desert cheers;
 Save where the bittern screams, with clam'rous throat,
 Responsive to the raven's hoarser note,
 That flaps her wing 'gainst yonder mould'ring tower;
 The sole surviving pledge of Roman power.

The glorious period *, wish'd so long in vain,
 Breaks forth at length in Anna's golden reign;
 When the same laws each happy nation bind,
 In strictest league by her wise councils join'd:
 When either triumphs in Britannia's name,
 Their pow'r, their int'rest, and their King, the same,
 And see, from far, yon glitt'ring star † appear,
 Whose lustre gilds our western hemisphere;
 These plains, oppress'd with one long wintry night,
 Feel the warm influence of its genial light:

* The Union.

† The happiness and security derived from the glorious Revolution are here alluded to, and the general encouragement given to agriculture by late parliaments.—Mr. Gray says,

“ The star of Brunswick shines serene.”

Green rising woods the lofty hills adorn,
 The fruitful valleys smile with waving corn;
 But stretch'd immense, beneath more northern skies,
 Uncultur'd still the barren region lies—

Graham beheld, and, in his prudent mind,
 Pond'ring awhile, the beauteous plan design'd:
 He mark'd the hallow'd scene, where, many an age,
 Beheld of old the British hosts engage;
 He saw the swain, with toil and want oppress'd,
 He saw—and manly pity heav'd his breast.
 He taught the wild, unskilful hind, to rear
 The tender plant, and mark the varying year;
 When the moist earth, enrich'd with genial rain,
 Expects, impatient, the protracted grain;
 When spreading shoots the pruning hand implore,
 Or autumn waves, mature, his yellow store.
 And lo! a race, in native wildness rude,
 That long had rang'd the dreary solitude,
 The meagre sons of sloth and pale disease,
 Spring from their trance—their rusty shares they seize;
 They raise the fence, they lift the pond'rous load,
 And form the ditch, and mark the future road.
 Their hard'ning limbs the tempest's rage sustain,
 While manlier vigour flows in ev'ry vein;

Heav'ns! with what rival zeal they toil, they sweat,
 Beneath th' inclement blast, or scorching heat;
 Their lord, with glorious hopes, their labours chears,
 And paints the plenty of approaching years;
 He marks the boundaries of ev'ry field,
 Nor scorns himself the weighty prong to wield,
 To break the clod, to crush the noxious weed,
 Or scatter, as he treads, the lib'ral seed.

The desert soon in lovelier garb appears,
 And ev'ry field the smile of plenty wears:
 Increasing years increasing treasures bring,
 With livelier verdure blooms returning spring;
 The swains, transported, view the grateful soil,
 And triumph in the meed of many a toil.
 When lo! a scene more dark and dreadful rose,
 Than e'er had swell'd the list of former woes;
 A tyrant, fiercer than the Danish band,
 Spread desolation o'er the smiling land.
 Near that fam'd spot where, * stung with shame and grief,
 Scotia's bold warriors spurn'd a minion chief:

* James V. having appointed his favourite, Oliver Sinclair, to command the army acting against Henry King of England, the Scots resented the indignity, refused to serve under him, and to a man laid down their arms.

And,

And, tho' more skill'd to conquer than to yield,
 Bade Henry triumph on a bloodless field.
 Full many a league a mighty swamp extends;
 The dusky heath by gentle slope ascends:
 The rash, advent'rous step will soon betray,
 And whelm the wight, incautious of his way.
 Woe to the trav'ler, whose benighted feet,
 By chance, shall stumble on this lone retreat;
 Soon shall the hopeless wand'rer meet his doom,
 Bewilder'd 'midst the vast incumbent gloom:
 Some faithless bog shall quickly close him round,
 Some chasm shall swallow in its gulph profound.
 This vast morass—oh grant, ye powers above,
 These fields may never more its fury prove—
 Dissolv'd by floods, and swol'n with mighty rains,
 Pour'd its black deluge o'er the neighbouring plains.
 Mark how the gloomy ocean, gath'ring round,
 Indignant swells, and bursts th' opposing mound:
 Ah see—thro' yonder beauteous vale * it spreads,
 Whelming, at once, an hundred fertile meads;

Then,

* "A tract, distinguished for its fertility and beauty, ran in form of a valley for some space in view of Netherby; it had been finely reclaimed from its original state, prettily divided, well planted with hedges, and well peopled: the ground, originally not worth sixpence an acre, was improved to the value of thirty shillings. I saw it in that situation in the year

Then, bearing onward, with resistless force,
 Sweeps herds and houses in its dreadful course;
 Till Esk's fair tide its mingling billows stain,
 That roll with added fury to the main.
 The trembling swains, with terror and amaze,
 Distracted on the cruel spoiler gaze—
 Such frantic horror glar'd in ev'ry face,
 As seiz'd of old the wild, astonish'd race,
 That saw Vesuvius first in thunder pour
 Fragments of rocks, and streams of molten ore;
 Whose fiery volumes blast their green alcoves,
 Their loaded vineyards, and their bending groves—

1769: at this time a melancholy extent of black turbery, the eruption of Solway-Moss, having in a few days covered grass and corn, levelled the boundaries of almost every farm, destroyed most of the houses, and drove the poor inhabitants to the utmost distress; till they found (which was not long) from their landlord every relief that a humane mind could suggest. Solway-Moss consists of sixteen hundred acres; lies some height above the cultivated tract, and seems to have been nothing but a collection of thin peaty mud: the surface itself was always so near the state of a quagmire that in most places it was unsafe for any thing heavier than a sportsman to venture on, even in the driest summer. The shell or crust that kept this liquid within bounds, nearest to the valley, was at first of sufficient strength to contain it, but by the imprudence of the peat-diggers, who were continually working on that side, became at length so weakened, as not to be able any longer to resist the weight pressing on it: the fluidity of the Moss was likewise greatly increased by three days rain of unusual violence, which preceded the eruption. About three hundred acres of moss were thus discharged, and about four hundred of land covered; but providentially not a human life lost." Mr. Pennant's Tour, p. 64, where may be found a more particular account of this event.

Untaught.

Untaught such dire extremes of fate to bear,
 The sullen rustic dropp'd, in wan despair :
 Extended on the damp, unwholesome earth,
 He curst the baleful moment of his birth ;
 The tear of anguish trembles in his eye,
 And his strong bosom heaves the frequent sigh.
 With wilder grief the frantic females rave,
 And bound, with horror, from the monster wave ;
 While from their breasts their trembling infants hung,
 And, conscious of their fate, more closely clung.

But soon their lord, oppress'd with generous grief,
 To each desponding wretch affords relief ;
 His lib'ral hand diffusive plenty pours :
 Benevolence unlocks her genial stores :
 He hears their plaints ; he calms the bursting sigh,
 And wipes the falling tear from ev'ry eye.
 The swains, with chearfulness, renew their toil,
 And lighten, of its load, the burthen'd soil ;
 The fields * once more their verdant hue resume,
 And with superior pride and beauty bloom.

* Since Mr. Pennant visited this place, some part of the Moss has, with infinite labour and expence, been removed ; a great part however still remains covered : but this tract is not of such extent, as to interrupt the pleasure that arises from a general view of the country.

How wide these furs their infant branches spread,
 And wave their wanton foliage o'er my head!
 Already, from the sultry dog's star heat,
 Their friendly shades afford a kind retreat;
 Ambitious to repay his guardian care,
 Who bade their tow'ring summits rise in air.—
 Let others boast the proud, aspiring pile,
 Columns and fanes, in ev'ry various style;
 With swelling arches bound the solemn glade,
 Or thunder down the steep the loud cascade;
 While thro' the shades, as fearful of the light,
 The polish'd statue glances on the fight,
 Here, Venus smiles, 'midst circling boughs conceal'd,
 And there, Minerva seems to shake her shield.
 Nature, great architect, these plains arrays,
 In pomp, beyond what mimic art displays;
 To them no works of foreign pride are known,
 Nor other bound, but heav'n's wide arch alone—
 Majestic thro' the midst, with murm'ring roar,
 See winding Esk his rapid current pour;
 On the bright wave the sportive salmon play,
 And bound and glisten in the noon-tide ray.

There tow'ring Skiddaw *, wrapt in awful shade,
 Monarch of mountains, rears his mighty head,
 Dark'ning with frowns fair Keswick's beauteous vale,
 He views beneath the gath'ring tempests fail,
 Secure, nor heeds the rolling thunder's rage;
 Tho' Scruffel † trembling marks the dire presage.

Pierc'd with congenial grief, my fancy flies
 To where Kirkconnel's neighb'ring woods arise;
 There, bending o'er the beauteous Ellen's ‡ tomb,
 She weeps the wretched nymph's untimely doom.
 So fair a plant, old Kirtle's wand'ring tide
 Had never cherish'd on its verdant side;
 But oh! what pen her various charms shall paint,
 Here even a Raphael's glowing tints were faint;
 Those radiant eyes, where lambent lightnings play,
 Those coral lips, that breathe the sweets of May;

* Skiddaw is plainly seen at the distance of thirty miles from this seat.

† Alluding to these proverbial lines—

When Skiddaw wears a cap,

Scruffel wots full well of that.

Scruffel is a mountain in Annandale in Scotland, the inhabitants of which prognosticate good or bad weather, from the mists that fall or rise on the brow of Skiddaw.

‡ See Mr. Pennant, page 88.

Those cheeks, that shame the morning's purple glow,
 That bosom, whiter than the purest snow :
 Around her sport a thousand laughing loves ;
 Each breast is kindled as the virgin moves :
 With her soft name, the woods, the valleys rung,
 And Ellen's praises dwelt on ev'ry tongue—
 Two rival swains, of nobler birth and fame,
 Together languish'd in the tender flame ;
 Bold Fleming knew to guide the whirling car,
 To dart the spear and stem the rage of war ;
 In Ardolph's breast ignobler transports roll'd,
 He boasts his large domains, his hoards of gold ;
 With these he sought the blooming maid to gain,
 Who spurn'd his proffer'd treasure with disdain.
 The warrior triumph'd in her partial care,
 For valour ever wins the gen'rous fair.
 With him she sparkled in the festive round,
 He spake, and rapture dwelt in ev'ry sound ;
 Together, thro' the winding vale they rove,
 Together, wander in the lonely grove,
 The feather'd warblers catch their tender strains,
 And wilder music floats along the plains.
 In rapture, thus, their moments roll'd away,
 While scarce the lover brooks the long delay ;

'Till

'Till Hymen smil'd propitious from above,
And shower'd down roses on the couch of love.

Ardolph, mean-time, with jealous cares oppress'd,
Felt ev'ry various passion tear his breast;
Rage, hatred, grief in mingling tempests rise,
Lour on his front, and fire his redd'ning eyes;
All frantic, wild, he sought a darksome glade,
And prostrate roll'd, beneath th' incumbent shade;
Then starts aghast, and pours these dreadful moans,
While each majestic oak in concert groans—

“ Ye arching glooms, that o'er this wretched head,
“ In sable pomp, your friendly horrors spread;
“ And wave, obedient to the sullen gale,
“ That murmurs, hoarse, along the lonely vale :
“ Thou moon, that glancing on yon distant stream,
“ Dart'st thro' the quiv'ring shades a silver gleam,
“ By you I swear ; hear all ye sylvan powers,
“ That haunt this tide and range these hallow'd bowers,
“ And stamp my vows : ere day's bright orb arise,
“ To deck with kindling light the blushing skies ;
“ The hated wretch this slighted arm shall feel,
“ And pour his life beneath my reeking steel ;
“ Yes, when transported with those blooming charms,
“ He sinks, all melting, in her circling arms ;

Then

" Then shall my vengeance wake, and fate shall clasp
 " The expiring hero in her chilling grasp—
 " Thou too, whom neither vows nor sighs could move,
 " Thou shalt the fierceness of my passion prove;
 " How will my bosom glow with rapturous heat,
 " How ev'ry pulse with thrilling transport beat,
 " As o'er that paradise of sweets I rove,
 " And satiate all my rage, and all my love!"

He spake, and guided by the moon's pale ray,
 Bursts thro' the winding gloom his eager way;
 Fierce as he moves, his furious steps resound;
 The dark heath shakes, the forest trembles round:
 As when, o'er sultry Libya's burning plains,
 Some tyger stalks, the terror of the swains;
 If chance a strolling kid, or wanton fawn,
 Thoughtless of danger, gambol o'er the lawn;
 His fiery eyes the panting spoil survey,
 He bounds and springs, exulting on his prey—
 Such savage transports flash from Ardolph's eyes,
 As sudden the devoted wretch he 'spies,
 With his fair spouse, beneath a neighb'ring grove,
 Reclin'd in all the tenderness of love.
 With headlong rage he plunges in the tide,
 Whose waves alone the hostile youths divide;

And, springing tow'rd's th' opposing bank, display'd
 To Fleming's startled view the vengeful blade :
 To screen her lover from th' impending blow,
 The beauteous nymph oppos'd her breast of snow ;
 Her snow-white breast the murd'rous weapon tore,
 And pierc'd her heart—that gush'd in floods of gore :
 The trembling husband clasp'd her, fainting, round,
 And eager strove to stanch the streaming wound ;
 While, fondly hanging on his beating breast,
 To his pale cheek her paler cheek she prest ;
 Then fixing stedfastly her wishful eyes,
 Essay'd to speak, but, choak'd with bursting sighs,
 She strove in vain—those eyes in darkness roll,
 And hov'ring seraphs catch her gasping soul.

Fleming, in frantic horror, seiz'd the blade,
 And instant struck the base affassin dead—
 Then, with a thousand struggling passions prest,
 He rais'd the pointed dagger to his breast :
 Scarce could his grief the desp'rate deed withstand,
 But conscious honour check'd his rising hand ;
 “ Yes, I will dare to live, and seek, in fight,
 “ A nobler passage to the shades of night :

O

“ Come,

“ Come, glory come, and spread thy smiling charms ;

“ O bear me to the battle’s mad alarms ;

“ Beat ev’ry drum, let ev’ry trumpet sound,

“ Till anguish, in the field of death, be drown’d.”

He said, and rushing to th’ embattled plain,

’Gainst the proud Turk * he led a valiant train ;

There glory own’d her son, and round his head,

Her radiant hands unfading laurels spread.

But while her choicest gifts the hero crown’d,

The lover languish’d with his secret wound :

Eager he hasten’d to his native shore,

And zephyr’s gentlest breezes waft him o’er ;

He sought the grove, where lay his lovely bride,

Stretch’d his fond limbs along the turf—and died.

On yonder mount where once, with hostile pride,

The Roman wav’d his crimson banner wide ;

A graceful structure meets the wond’ring sight,

And fills the gazing stranger with delight :

As o’er these vales he rolls his eager eyes,

And sees an † Eden in a desert rise.

* He afterwards served in the wars against the Infidels.

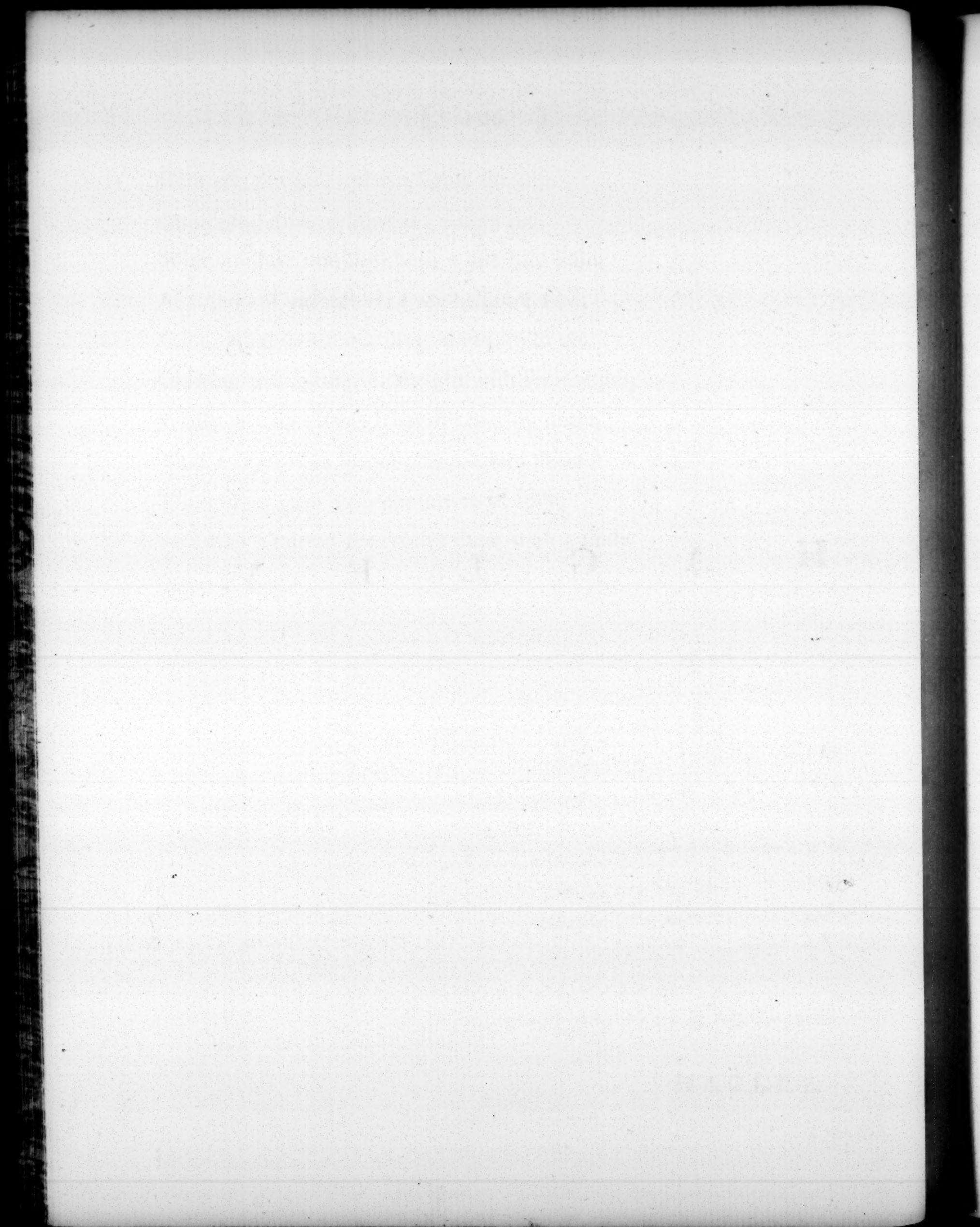
† The reader will not think this description much exaggerated, who has travelled farther northward than *Netherby* ; as the entrance into Scotland, on that side, for many miles together, bears a most unpromising and dreary aspect.

What tho' no useless grandeur deck the dome,
 Rich with the shining spoils of Greece or Rome;
 What tho' no gilded roofs, with high emblaze,
 Pour on the dazzled eye their streaming rays;
 Yet beauty smiles confess'd in ev'ry part,
 While nature crowns the bold attempts of art :
 Here elegance, with use, her charms combines,
 And thro' the whole with softer lustre shines.
 No more these walls the victor's shouts prolong,
 Echoing the clash of mail, the martial song;
 Within their bounds reside a gentler train;
 Here sacred peace and social virtue reign :
 Here, groaning with its freight, the friendly board
 Proclaims the bounty of its generous lord;
 Here famish'd travellers forget their woes,
 And weary'd strangers sink in soft repose.

To crown the whole, view yon proud fane ascend,
 Which, guardian seraphs, with their wings defend !
 Behold ! all radiant with celestial light,
 The dome, ascending, swells upon the sight;
 The solemn gates our musing souls inspire
 With rev'rend awe, and rouse devotion's fire;

Here oft, as yonder planet lights the day,
Or ev'ning sheds oblique her purple ray,
With constant zeal shall bend a youthful train,
And songs of rapture rend the hallow'd fane.
Hark, what sweet warblings undulate in air,
Glowing with praise, or fraught with fervent pray'r;
While, as they chaunt Jehovah's mighty name,
Thro' ev'ry bosom spreads the kindred flame;
Their pious vows shall consecrate the pile,
And heav'n's dread fire receive them with a smile.

H A G L E Y.



P R E F A C E.

HAGLEY is situated in the neighbourhood of Birmingham, on the road leading to Bewdley, in Worcestershire, and is not less indebted to nature for its beauties than the taste and genius of the late Lord Lyttelton.

Through a long dark avenue of limes we approach the house, which is an elegant modern building, and adorned with paintings of the most eminent Italian masters. There are likewise some busts and statues of great value; those of Milton, Shakespeare, Spenser, and Dryden, in the library, were made by Scheenmaker, and left by Mr. Pope, at his death, to his lordship. The views from the house are every way delightful; particularly that on the garden side. Immediately opposite, at some distance, on the brow of a lawn, stands a light column, backed by a noble grove; on the left of which the temple of Theseus presents itself, on the beautiful hill of Witchberry, embosomed in firs; and above this, on a higher eminence, towers the obelisk.

Leaving the house we come to the Parish Church, a small Gothic building, in which is a beautiful monument to the memory of Lucy Lyttelton, his lordship's first lady.

Every reader of taste will remember the beautiful monody composed by his lordship on the death of this lady, which does equal honour to the memory of both. On the left of this monument is a small unadorned stone, which acquaints us, that the noble author rests below. This was placed here by his lordship's particular desire, and strongly impresses the mind with an idea of that virtue which sought applause, superior to what man could bestow.

A narrow path leads from hence along the lawn to a gloomy hollow, whose steep banks are covered with large rocky stones, as if rent asunder by some violent concussion of nature. The gushing cascade, on either side, adds to the solemnity of the scene,

We now reascend the bank, and winding to the right, arrive at the Alcove, which is supported by the Palladian bridge, of elegant construction. Never before did the hand of art model, or the eye of fancy behold, a scene so ravishing. The grand cascade tumbling from one rock to another down the embosomed vale; the richness of the woods, and the distant Rotunda that terminates the swelling vista, at once fill the mind with astonishment and pleasure.

Keeping to the left hand of the water, a Portico, on the summit of a rising ground, catches the eye with peculiar grace. We enter, through a small wicket, the environs of the grotto. From a bench under an old oak of surprising magnitude we have a most pleasing prospect of this retirement; the shrubs and flowers scattered in profusion on the banks, salute us with their fragrance as we penetrate its inmost recesses; where stands a statue of Venus, as just rising from the water: Here are several grotesque stone alcoves, and seats shaded with laurels.

Opposite

trate its inmost recesses; where stands a statue of Venus, as just rising from the water: Here are several grotesque stone alcoves, and seats shaded with laurels.

Opposite to these is another cascade, which is decorated with large vitrified cinders, and other stones of a shining substance, which have a very pleasing effect. This rural solitude is quitted, not without reluctance, and after rising the steep ascent, we continue our walk under the shade of spacious trees to a bank, on which is an urn, dedicated to the memory of the late Mr. Shenstone.

Turning hence to the left, the rotunda again strikes the view, as we walk along the sides of a solitary glen, thick planted with coppice and other trees. Crossing this glen, you arrive at the favourite spot of the late Mr. Pope, in the midst of a swelling irregular lawn, entirely surrounded with woods. His lordship has erected an urn to the memory of this bard; whom, living, he honoured with his particular friendship.

The ascent now becomes bold and steep, winding amidst a variety of stately trees, to the highest eminence in the park; on which is situated, with great judgment, and not less beauty, the Ruin. This venerable pile bears every appearance of antiquity; and we are confirmed in that opinion, by the massy stones which have in many places tumbled down from the ruinous walls, and the mouldering towers almost covered with ivy. But how great is our astonishment, when, on a nearer approach, we perceive it to be a useful modern structure, built for a keeper's lodge, and so disposed, as to make it a principal object from several seats in the park. Here, indeed, the taste of the designer has displayed itself; and his lord-

ship, in leaving one of the towers entire, hath afforded an opportunity of surveying an horizon, which, for its vast extent, and the grandeur and beauty of the objects it displays, is no where to be rivalled.

From hence the path leads to the foot of the Clent Hills, which are situated without the park pale, but amply recompence the labour of ascending them, by the extensive prospect exhibited from their summits. If the stranger chooses to pursue the path on the left, he will find, near the extremity of the park, a handsome Gothic seat, which gives an agreeable view of these hills, the ruin, and the distant country. But pursuing that to the right, through one of the most delicious groves imaginable, he will soon arrive at a seat, which has this inscription :

Sedes Contemplationis.
Omnia Vanitas.

Nothing can equal the pleasing serenity we experience in this delightful recess, so admirably adapted to relieve the eye, fatigued with the great and distant objects before presented to its view.

The next object that claims attention is the Hermitage, composed of clumps of wood and roots of old trees, carelessly heaped together. The floor is neatly paved with small pebbles, and is surrounded with a seat, covered with a mat.

We now descend into a vale, where are some pools of water; on every side surrounded by large chefnuts, and spreading elms. Along this vale the path winds through a grove of oaks up a steep hill,
near

near the summit of which is a seat, from whence we have an immensely extended view of the country, and the house delightfully situated in the lawn below. It would be contrary to my plan, which is only to give the reader a general idea of this place, preparatory to his perusal of the following pages, and indeed impossible, to enumerate all the beauties that appear from this eminence. On the back of the seat is this inscription, taken from the fifth book of *Paradise Lost* :

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty ! thine this universal frame——

We shall therefore retire into the grove behind ; where, from the first bench, the eye is presented with a more confined prospect, which, by its variety, is rendered doubly pleasing. Thomson's seat, the Temple of Theseus, and the obelisk, appear to great advantage, at well judged distances amidst hanging woods, and lawns covered with the liveliest verdure. From the second bench is seen, between the branches of the trees, the stupendous Wrekin, a high mountain in Shropshire, at the distance of at least thirty miles, and the buildings are totally excluded. The path now leads to the Doric Portico, thus inscribed,

Quieti et Musis.

This is, in my opinion, one of the most agreeable retreats in the park ; and is situated on the brow of a very steep lawn, bounded every way by the noblest trees that ever graced the forest.

Hence the path leads into a rude and gloomy dell, down whose deep shelving sides several little streams continually run, that delight us with their coolness, and soothe us with their murmurs.

After rising the declivity on the opposite side, the path leads to the Rotunda, a neat and elegant building, from which the alcove and water above-mentioned are very striking objects. Proceeding onward we descend into another deep glen, but in many circumstances varying from the former, and soon after the scene changes into a beautiful extent of lawn, where the parsonage-house presents itself to the view, and a graceful row of elms conducts us to Thomson's seat.

The prospect from this spot is such, as never fails to fix the attention, and raise the delight of the beholder. The steep hanging woods directly opposite; amidst which the Doric portico displays itself with greater beauty; the Clent Hills and the Ruin on one hand, with the romantic Malvern Hills bounding the horizon on the other, contribute to adorn the scene with variety, beauty, and grandeur.

Winding through the grove on the right, which affords a distant view of lord Stamford's grounds, an eminence appears, on the brow of which is erected the Column, bearing a statue of Frederic, prince of Wales, the father of his present majesty. The view from hence is equally extensive with that from the hill before-mentioned, commands the house, and is in every respect correspondent with that display of taste and magnificence, which prevails amidst the recesses of Hagley.

H A G L E Y.

O N C E more, with trembling hand, I strike the lyre,
 Genius of verse the living lays inspire ;
 Ye tenants of the glade, that o'er me spread
 Your flutt'ring wings, and warble round my head,
 Lend me your notes—and thou, whose love-lorn tale,
 Wild-echoing, floats along the dying gale,
 O Philomel—if e'er at eve I rove
 To hear thy tender plaints in yonder grove ;
 O sweetest far of all the feather'd train,
 Warm my rapt breast with thy seraphic strain :
 HAGLEY I sing—to HAGLEY's bowers belong
 The softest measures, and the noblest song.

Ye blest retreats, ye pleasing glooms, all hail !
 Ye varied scenes of woodland, hill and dale,
 Whether my eyes with hurried glance survey
 Yon flow'ring lawns in wild luxuriance gay,
 Or to those distant forests stretch with pain,
 That tower to heav'n and darken all the plain :

Still as the varied prospect meets my sight,
My conscious bosom beats with new delight.

Where shall the song begin? For every place
Invites alike, and beams with rival grace:
From scene to scene the muse bewilder'd flies,
While more than fairy landscapes round her rise—
Such mingled transports our grand parent knew,
When nature's charms first met his wond'ring view;
Led by his Maker thro' the blooming wild,
Where-e'er he rov'd, rekindling beauties smil'd:
On ev'ry plant he gaz'd, on ev'ry flower,
And tasted ev'ry fruit that deck'd the bower;
Paus'd in the valley, mark'd the mountain's pride,
Or hanging o'er the fountain's verdant side,
Admir'd his shadow in the silver flood;
The gay reflected lawn, the dancing wood,
The heav'n's blue concave, and the solar blaze—
Till thought was lost amidst the shining maze!

Ye spreading limes! On whose majestic brows
An hundred rolling years have shed their snows;
Ye hills and op'ning plains, where nature pours
With lavish hand the choicest of her stores;

Ye hallow'd roofs, which science hath array'd
 In all the glowing pomp of light and shade,
 That oft have heard a Pope's melodious tongue,
 And oft resounded while a Thomson sung,
 Receive the meanest of the tuneful train,
 Who trembles while he wakes the votive strain.
 Beauty and strength thro' all the pile unite,
 Warm the bold thought, and fix the roving sight:
 Taste guides the rule, while judgment marks the lines,
 And all the master in the structure shines.
 Here live the rev'rend sages of mankind,
 Whose works delighted, or inform'd the mind;
 The laurel'd offspring of immortal Rome
 Live here, and with their presence guard the dome!
 Here too her later sons, not less in fame,
 Whose fingers wak'd to life the pencil'd frame,
 Or soften'd into sense the rugged stone,
 Flourish amidst creations of their own.

Come forth, my muse, and wand'ring o'er the green,
 Mark the fair glories of this living scene—
 From yon proud Obelisk, whose tow'ring brow
 Throws its long shadows o'er the plains below;

From

From yonder Fane*, which darksome firs embrace,
 Down to the graceful Column's humbler base :
 O would some power my kindling breast inspire
 With Titian's genius, or with Thomson's fire;
 Soon should the smiling lawn, the purple skies,
 The hanging grove, on breathing canvas rise ;
 In all its charms the vivid landscape shine,
 And nature's touches only rival mine.

Beneath this antient pile, whose Gothic tower
 Pale ivy clasps, and circling elms embower,
 Rests his pale head, who first these beauties plann'd,
 And rais'd this Eden with his fost'ring hand—
 Dumb the soft music of his tuneful tongue,
 On which the list'ning swains enraptur'd hung ;
 That heart, which lately leapt at beauty's name,
 That glow'd with virtue's, friendship's purest flame,
 Beats now no more—let thoughtless man attend,
 And mark the point where all his triumphs end !
 With mournful pomp, by his unconscious side,
 Cold as her urn, reclines his beauteous bride ;

* Temple of Theseus.

To whose fair memory flow'd the tend'rest tear,
That ever trembled o'er the female bier :
O let congenial anguish pause, and weep,
Where beauty, worth, and buried genius sleep !

Thou little murmuring rill shalt be our guide,
Whose amber waves along the pebbles glide ;
Sacred perhaps to some fair rural power,
That sweeps unseen amidst the neighb'ring bower.

To that lone Dell, beneath the deepen'd shade,
Where down the valley bursts the rude cascade ;
Hence let us fly from day's increasing beam,
Lull'd by the murmurs of the babbling stream :
Or farther bend, to where the moaning dove
Invites our steps to yonder gay Alcove :
Delightful haunt—where sportive elves repair,
And chaunt soft warblings to the midnight air ;
What distant sound is that which meets my ears,
Sweet as the music of the rolling spheres !
Heav'n's ! what a glorious scene ! with rapid sweep
The headlong waters rush from steep to steep ;
While the grey rocks, whose base they foam around,
Repels them as they break with furious bound :

The sparkling sun-beams on their surface play,
 And the bright waves reflect a double day.
 Mark with what pomp the dark o'er-arching wood
 Bends its broad arms to taste the billowy flood;
 While far above, on yon green mountain's height.
 The bold rotunda swells upon my sight.

Now o'er the sloping lawn's luxuriant side,
 Where stands the portico in all its pride;
 Soft let me seek the grotto's cool retreat,
 And rest awhile on yon sequester'd seat
 Beneath that antient oak—the forest's boast,
 Whose branching arms might shield a num'rous host—
 Fair Venus, to thy guardian power I bow,
 Propitious smile, and hear my proffer'd vow;
 Still on thy bard thy genial influence shed,
 Still twine thy myrtles round his favour'd head;
 So shall he wake for thee the sounding string,
 And ev'ry mountain with thy praises ring.
 Ye moss-clad banks, where twining violets bloom,
 That load the scented breeze with soft perfume:
 Ye verdant shrubs, permit a stranger guest
 On your soft couch his fainting limbs to rest—

Thou

Thou gushing flood, thro' whose transparent stream,
 Of glassy hue, a thousand fragments gleam,
 Still murmur on—while Morpheus, drowsy god,
 O'er my scorch'd temples waves his leaden rod.
 But other scenes, as rapturous, bid me rise,
 And other beauties call my wandering eyes.

Now will the muse the winding path ascend,
 And to that gloomy bank her footsteps bend,
 To hail her Shenstone—and, with grief sincere,
 Drop o'er his shade the tributary tear;
 That tear which he to suff'ring virtue gave,
 Shall now bedew his own lamented grave.

Ye fairy vales, and thou, enchanting glade*,
 His fostering hand in artless pomp array'd,
 Where is your Corydon? Ye sylvan powers,
 That wont to rove 'midst those deserted bowers,
 With roses who shall deck your lonely way,
 What birds shall warble, or what fountains play?
 For Corydon is gone—The shepherds come,
 But ev'ry flute, and ev'ry voice is dumb;

* Virgil's Grove; which is the glory of the Leasowes.

The flocks with shriller plaints his loss deplore,
And, bleating moan—"Our master is no more!"

In yonder lawn, beside the bending wood,
The bard of Twit'nam erst, delighted stood;
With nature's charms, or Homer's rapt, he sung,
And lays spontaneous warbled from his tongue.
Behold where friendship rears the pious urn,
Fond pledge of thee that never must return,
In these lov'd haunts, with more than mortal fire,
To swell the notes, and smite the sounding lyre.

How high yon Turret, mouldering in decay,
Majestic soars 'midst ruins rude and grey;
Up the steep pile aspiring ivy creeps,
And in its shade the bat securely sleeps:
Ah, Lyttelton! in vain thy fancy strives
To imitate, where real nature lives—
For still in spite of thee, in spite of art,
Her anient spirit breathes thro' ev'ry part—
In some blest moment, sure, thy daring hand
O'erpower'd the nymph, and caught her magic wand!
Trembling, at length, I reach the glorious height,
And the wide landscape bursts upon my sight;

Scarce

Scarce can I roll my eyes from side to side,
 Where far beneath the distant rivers glide :
 Where cities swell, where forests, dark and deep,
 Stretch o'er the vallies with tremendous sweep—
 Here the proud Malvern * hills romantic rise,
 There the great Wrekin mingles with the skies;
 Here Clent's delightful summits smile around,
 And the Black Mountains † there the vast horizon bound.

Now let the notes in mournful cadence flow,
 All wildly sweet, and breathe the soul of woe;
 Strains, such as warbled late o'er Lucia's tomb,
 Sooth'd her pale ghost, and chear'd the mirky gloom :
 When these lone bow'rs with softer measures rung,
 Than ever dropt from Petrarch's tender tongue.
 Her course the muse to yonder mountain bends,
 Where, wrapt in shade, the lessening spire ascends,
 There will she wail the royal infant's doom,
 Bid round his shrine eternal laurels bloom;
 And while her eyes pour forth the torrent flood,
 Her hand shall write the tale in lines of blood!

* The Malvern hills divide this county, on the south-west side, from Herefordshire, and rise to a great height, one above another, for seven miles together.

† These mountains, and the round hill near Radnor in Wales, are, in a clear atmosphere, distinctly visible; though at the distance of near eighty miles.

In those dark times, when frantic discord pour'd
 The gleaming horrors of her vengeful sword
 O'er half the ravag'd globe—and Saxon chains
 In slavery bound Britannia's hardy swains,
 There dwelt a prince *; whom fate's severest frown
 Curst with the hopes of Mercia's glittering crown;
 For ere nine summers, circling o'er his head,
 On his young cheek the silver down had spread,
 The hapless Kenelm wept his ravish'd fire,
 And saw the brother of his heart expire!
 Nor yet remain'd a mother's fost'ring care,
 To gild the scene, and chase his deep despair;
 The baleful hour that life to Kenelm gave,
 Consign'd the wretched parent to the grave.

* “ On the death of Kenulph, King of the Mercians, the kingdom fell to his son
 “ Kenelm, then an infant, whose elder sister, Quendred, practised with Askebert, her lover,
 “ and the young king's guardian, to make away with him; which, that he might do the
 “ more secretly, he had the young king into Clent-wood, in this county, under the fair pre-
 “ tence of taking pleasure in hunting, and when he had gotten him into a suitable place, he
 “ cut off his head, and buried him where no man knew.”

Vide Plott's Hist. of Staffordshire, p. 412.

Subjects of the descriptive kind labour under this peculiar disadvantage: they are seldom read but by persons who are interested by their particular knowledge of the beauties of the place described. To make them more general therefore, by introducing historical events, or enlivening episodes, has been always the conduct of writers who were emulous of more universal attention. If the candid reader will forgive the disproportionate length of the following story, which is not the offspring of poetic invention, the author hopes the truly tragical scenes it contains will sufficiently apologize for its other defects.

One

One only sister shar'd his filial grief,
 Whose fondness gave his bleeding heart relief;
 Forlorn they wander thro' the lonely wood,
 And mix their murmurs with the sounding flood;
 Or speechless bend and kiss the hallow'd bier,
 Returning sigh for sigh, and tear for tear.

Thus many a tedious month in anguish past,
 And ev'ry month more irksome than the last;
 But fiercer pangs the beauteous maid oppress,
 And love and grief divide her anxious breast.
 To guard the realm from foreign tyrant's rage,
 And guide the monarch in his tender age,
 Was Askebert's high care; whose mighty name,
 Thro' all the west renown'd for martial fame,
 Struck dread thro' ev'ry rebel Saxon's soul,
 That dar'd resist his sov'reign's high controul;
 Yet beauty's charms could smoothe the warrior's brow,
 His breast of steel with softer transports glow;
 Those finewy limbs, that on the embattled plain
 Sublimely tower'd o'er myriads of the slain,
 With matchless grace amidst the dance could move,
 And warm the tender female heart to love—

Fair Kendred saw, and felt the rapturous heat
 Thro' ev'ry pulse with quick vibration beat :
 In vain she strove her frantic pains to hide;
 Or stop resistless passion's swelling tide ;
 Her conscious thoughts in all her features rise,
 Glow on her cheeks, and languish in her eyes :
 Nor less the baron felt the secret flame,
 But sigh'd impatient for the royal dame ;
 Such savage joy the tiger's breast inspires,
 Or dæmons, madd'ning with incestuous fires !
 Treason and slaughter in his bosom brood,
 That burns for power, and thirsts for infant blood ;
 His guilty flame from curst ambition springs,
 And love conceals a dagger with his wings—
 Yet softest sounds adorn'd his flowing tongue,
 On which the nymph with rapt attention hung,
 Swift thro' each sense the mingling poison stole,
 And scepter'd splendors fire her tainted soul.
 Warm'd by her smiles, the fell barbarian glows,
 His dark and dreadful purpose to disclose ;
 And while with eager joy her hand he prest,
 Thus his false lips th' attentive maid addrest :
 “ Fairest of Mercia's nymphs, whose angel charms
 “ Have fill'd this panting breast with soft alarms ;

" Dear, blooming idol of my doating eyes,
 " For whom I waste the tedious night in sighs,
 " How long in doubt and anguish shall I pine,
 " When call that paradise of beauty mine?
 " Haste thee, my love; to yonder fane away,
 " The breathing altars chide our long delay;
 " This hour the hoary seer shall join our hands,
 " And Hymen bind us in his myrtle bands."
 The nymph obey'd: her kindling cheeks assume
 A deeper crimson, as she reach'd the dome.
 There while the priests the solemn rites prepare,
 He mark'd the tumults of the trembling fair;
 And gazing, with that look of villain joy,
 That masks the fiend, and smiles—but to destroy;
 On ev'ry charm with wanton praises dwelt,
 Dissembling transports which he never felt:
 " Blest with the beams of those blue rolling eyes,
 " I envy not the gods their purple skies;
 " My Kendred's thousand beauties to behold,
 " Might draw down Woden * from his throne of gold.
 " But Woden's self should never taste thy charms,
 " Nor force thee trembling from my bridal arms:

* Woden was the principal deity of the Saxons.

" How would the scepter, by thy father borne,
 " His lovely daughter's snow-white hand adorn !
 " The gems, that in the crown of Mercia glow,
 " How would they sparkle on thy brighter brow ;
 " And mingling with thy flowing, auburn hair,
 " Surpass the splendors of the proudest fair !
 " Shake not—nor dread to mount a brother's throne,
 " Which years and birth more justly stamp thy own ;
 " Infirm, and tott'ring with each rougher breeze,
 " Soon may he fall the victim of disease ;
 " Or if disease should spare his infant head,
 " There want not means to mix him with the dead."—
 " Ah cease," the Princess cries, " that piercing strain,
 " Nor let a sister raise her voice in vain ;
 " If my lov'd Askebert hath thus decreed,
 " The throne be ours—but let not Kenelm bleed :
 " O spare his tender age, and let his fate
 " Be chains for life, or exile from the state."
 She spake ; and thus the guileful peer replied,
 While his false tongue his murd'rous heart belied :
 " Well hast thou said—Yes, left his vengeful hand
 " Hurl the red torch of faction round the land ;
 " Far, far from hence to Mercia's distant bound,
 " Where trackless forests stretch immense around,

" And

“ And length’ning swamps thro’ howling desarts spread,
 “ Some faithful hind his devious steps shall lead :
 “ While we, triumphing in a nation’s smile,
 “ The fondest, happiest pair of Albion’s isle,
 “ Secure in rounds of endless rapture move,
 “ And feast on all the luxuries of love.”

The magic sound swift darted to her brain,
 While fiercer tumults throb in ev’ry vein :
 Her hand he printed with an ardent kiss,
 And the last rites confirm their impious blifs.

The sounding clarions now th’ event declare,
 The assembled lords the nuptial banquet share ;
 The royal victim flew to be caress’d,
 Nor knew a *murd’rer* clasp’d him to his breast.
 “ Kenelm, at length, thy pious grief refrain,
 “ This day demands our rapture’s loudest strain ;
 “ To-morrow mount thy choicest, swiftest steed,
 “ Beneath our spears the foaming boar shall bleed :
 “ The youth of Mercia call thee to the plain,
 “ And thy fair sister deigns to grace our train.”

The prince delighted his command obeys,
 And springs from slumber with the morning rays :

But when the chace in all its fury burn'd,
 To these lone hills his devious course he turn'd;
 And as their steeds the dreary wild ascend,
 " This suits our purpose well," exclaim'd the fiend!
 " Purpose! what purpose?—O, my honour'd lord,
 " What means that frown, and ah! that gleaming sword!
 " If aught my rash, unthinking youth hath err'd,
 " To rouse thy just revenge, in deed, or word;
 " Behold me roll repentant at thy feet,
 " Low in the dust thy pardon to intreat;
 " O, by these tears, that threat'ning hand remove,
 " My father's friendship, and my sister's love;
 " In bonds of steel my tender limbs confine,
 " In damp and dreary dungeons let me pine;
 " But spare"—the brandish'd falchion stopt his cries,
 And his meek soul fled quiv'ring to the skies.

As the first murd'rer, from the stroke that gave
 His prostrate, bleeding brother, to the grave;
 Thus, ghastly pale, this second Cain arose,
 Such horror ev'ry shudd'ring sinew froze!
 But no remorse could touch that iron heart,
 Where never conscience plung'd her burning dart.

With

With savage rage his purple robes he tore,
 And dy'd them deeper in the reeking gore;
 Then deeply delv'd the dark, unhallow'd tomb,
 And gave the mangled corpse to earth's affrighted womb.
 But now, resounding from the neighb'ring vale,
 The horn's shrill clangors load the chearful gale:
 Furious he snatch'd the vest, that dropt with blood,
 And, like an arrow darting thro' the wood,
 Terror and guilt, wild-glaring in his eyes,
 Fill'd the wild concave with his dreadful cries.

" Halt, comrades halt—this bloody robe I found
 " Deep in the forest, smoaking on the ground;
 " Some prowling savage, or some ruffian's sword,
 " Hath rent the bosom of our youthful lord;
 " Through yonder brake methought I saw him borne,
 " By the fierce, panting boar—all gash'd and torn—
 " Haste, let us pierce its gloom; some happier spear
 " May reach the monster in his mad career."
 " As mine does thee"—indignant Kendred said,
 And with her sabre clove his trait'rous head.
 " The monster thou—inhuman murderer go,
 " Where vengeance waits thee in the realms below,
 " To scoffing fiends thy tale of horror tell,
 " And reign with furies in the deeps of hell:

" My

" My soul with thine shall take her guilty flight,
 " Pursue thee howling thro' the realms of night ;
 " Still thunder in thy ears the promis'd throne,
 " And make the shades re-murmur with her moan !
 " Dear, martyr'd youth, that, in thy tenderest age,
 " Hast fall'n the prey of fell ambition's rage ;
 " On the pale, trembling wretch, from heav'n look down,
 " That dared aspire to seize a brother's crown—
 " Behold the prostrate author of thy woe :
 " Mine was the hand that gave the deathful blow—
 " Mine was the traitor-voice that bade thee bleed,
 " And thus this dagger shall revenge the deed !"
 She spake, and kissing thrice th' impurpled vest,
 Thrice plung'd the weapon in her beauteous breast.

The muse, all pensive, hastes to happier plains,
 Where Contemplation, pale-eyed matron, reigns ;
 Deep thron'd in tenfold glooms that round her rise,
 In proud theatric state, and sweep the skies.
 She comes, in robes of virgin white array'd ;
 Silent as night, she stalks along the glade :
 She speaks ; the solemn sounds conviction roll,
 And rush like lightning to my inmost soul :

" Mortal,

" Mortal, whose foot my hallow'd haunts pervades,
 " Approach the Genius of these awful shades :
 " And learn—how vain the monarch's purple state,
 " How low the boasted triumph of the great ;
 " Compar'd with raptures which content inspires,
 " When wisdom guides the mind, and virtue fires—
 " Ye blinded wretches, who for glory brave
 " The battle's roar, and stem the raging wave ;
 " And ye, who fir'd with boundless thirst of gain,
 " Tempt the dark mine, or tread the burning plain,
 " To this lone spot retire, and know that " All is vain"—
 But see where gathering clouds deform the sky,
 To yonder cell's deep covert let us fly,
 Where darker trees their twilight horrors spread,
 And wrap some hermit in their iron shade—
 Heard you that dreadful clap--so loud, and long,
 'Twas heav'n's high voice that ratified the song :
 Yes, ye fair syrens, that betray mankind,
 Whose various influence tears the human mind,
 Wealth, beauty, power, I dare renounce you all,
 And prostrate bend at virtue's awful call !
 I see, I see your fading charms expire,
 Darken'd their lustre, and extinct their fire ;

Far,

Far, far from you contented would I dwell
 Beneath these roofs, and bid the world farewell;
 Here innocence and peace should crown my days,
 And my fond heart forget its throb for praise:
 No longer conscious to the taste of blood,
 The fruits of earth should be my humbler food;
 My thirst I'd slake in yon translucent stream,
 With God, my guide, my guardian, and my theme.

How soft the fragrance of this vernal shower,
 That lights the gem and wakes the drooping flower!
 On magic ground, entranc'd, I seem to tread,
 Where sparkling emeralds pave the glowing mead:
 With more than mortal notes the groves resound,
 With more than Persian odours breathes the ground.

Ere yon resplendent lamp forsakes the day,
 I'll climb the steep, and mark his setting ray
 From yonder feat—where, to his Maker's praise,
 Some pious swain hath grav'd the duteous lays—
 Unbounded scene—beyond my humble strain,
 For here a Milton's daring powers were vain;
 "These are thy glorious works, Almighty King,"
 The bard astonish'd said, and dropp'd the string!

If my fond eyes the distant hills behold,
 Those skies, distinct with azure and with gold,
 Sweep o'er the forest, range the desert heath,
 Or wanton in the spreading lawn beneath :
 His hand I see in nature's thousand forms ;
 His power supports them, and his spirit warms.

How beauteous, 'midst the gay surrounding mead,
 Does yon proud mansion rear its ample head !
 Whose polish'd towers with trembling radiance gleam,
 As the broad sun obliquely darts his beam.
 What tho' Dædalean skill hath deck'd the dome,
 Vandyke or Titian glow in ev'ry room ;
 These are its meanest pride—with all the fire,
 With all the genius of his noble fire,
 There dwells a Lyttelton—immortal name !
 That fires my fancy with rekindling flame ;
 As all thy glorious ancestors I trace,
 And the long splendor of thy antient race :
 Bards, Prelates, Chiefs, in bright succession rise,
 And ermin'd fages sweep before my eyes.

Nor will the muse neglect, in proud disdain,
 The decent village, and the lowly swain,

The sheep, that thro' an hundred pastures feed,
 The half-rais'd ox, and brisk disporting steed—
 But ah! ye lovely, fading scenes, farewell;
 Farewell ye fields, where health and pleasure dwell;
 The thrush invites me from the secret bower,
 The lone owl hails me from her antient tower;
 The shades of eve, advancing, veil the plains,
 And half unsung the pleasing theme remains.

Fatigued, tho' ravish'd with these glorious views,
 Pleas'd I retire with silence and the muse
 Beneath this Doric roof—my aching sight
 Dwells on these humbler greens with fresh delight;
 Where shades o'er shades, in deep'ning pomp, ascend,
 And thro' the vale their lengthen'd gloom extend:
 Here oaks of mighty growth the plain embrown,
 There hoary elms or branching chesnuts frown:
 Here towering limes the tempest's fury dare,
 Or darker firs, luxuriant, shoot in air.

Now let me penetrate yon lonely dale,
 Where in soft whispers sighs the hollow gale;
 And many a murmuring rivulet breaking round,
 Lulls my rapt senses with its soothing sound.

With rapture thro' the darksome glen I stray,
 Where twining coppice half exclude the day;
 High o'er my head the cuckow swells her throat,
 And clamorous rooks prolong the solemn note.
 But lo, where brighter scenes my steps invite,
 By change more grateful to the roving sight;
 With joy the muse expands her rising wing,
 O'er vallies, flush'd with all the pride of spring;
 O'er plains, gay-smiling with eternal green,
 Plains, which had Mecca's boasted prophet seen,
 Here had he bade his blooming Houri rise,
 And HAGLEY been his fairer Paradise.

The sun hath now withdrawn his fiercer fires,
 And yonder see his last, faint beam expires :
 'Tis fancy's hour—and now the fairy train,
 Whose pinions wont to sweep the dewy plain,
 Rush from their haunts, beneath the shadowy dell,
 The moss-green grotto, and the pebbled cell.
 Hark! what soft strains of music float around;
 From bow'r to bow'r the length'ning notes resound :
 Will Thomson now descend and seize the lyre,
 And join in concert with the woodland quire—

Come, gentle bard, together let us rove,
 Wrapt in high converse, thro' the darkest grove;
 Together let us tread thy fav'rite lawn,
 And mark the transports of the bounding fawn:
 For still, enamour'd of thy warbling shell,
 With thee, fond swain, the Graces lov'd to dwell.
 Nature confess'd her darling's magic hand,
 And flowers, obedient, sprang at thy command.
 The Seasons danc'd around their bard, and shed
 Their choicest, sweetest products on thy head.
 But nobler strains of bright, seraphic love,
 Warm thy bold fancy in the realms above,
 Delighted with some kindred soul to stray,
 And tempt the dazzling realms of purer day.
 Yet here, of old, beneath this solemn glade,
 This bower, now sacred to thy awful shade;
 Thou with the friendly Pope would'st oft prolong
 The social strain, or raise the moral song.
 Immortal pair! whose lays the muse approves,
 Whom freedom honours, and their country loves.
 And well might he, in whose harmonious mind
 Each softer pow'r, and ev'ry grace combin'd,
 This beauteous scene with partial eyes survey,
 Where art and nature all their charms display;

Woods,

Woods, mountains, vales, with rival splendor vie,
Awe the rapt soul, and tire the gazing eye.

The deeper shades descend; my anxious muse
With quicken'd step the winding tract pursues:
Gloomy her path; yet oft departing day,
Thro' the long vista darts its welcome ray:
And many an op'ning half-displays to sight,
The dubious landscape, fading into night.
Beyond where those brown desert wastes extend,
Envil's green hills and lofty woods ascend:
There Stamford, rural swain, delights to roam,
While round the tumbling torrents dash their foam;
Or in some shed of fancy's work reclines,
Sooth'd with the murmurs of his waving pines.
Great peer, ennobled by the generous mind,
Who, like the mighty fathers of mankind,
Scorns not the culture of his native plains,
Nor spurns the labours of industrious swains.

Mark where the moon, in silver pomp array'd,
Skirts with her orient beam the dusky glade;
And as her silent chariot moves along,
The burning orbs of heav'n around her throng;

Full on this pile her rays reflected shine,
 That bears the noblest of the Brunswick line.
 Frederic, all hail! my country's early boast—
 O hapless prince! admir'd, belov'd, and lost.
 Thy anxious heart beat high for Britain's fame,
 And Britain lov'd thee with a parent's flame.
 Her daughters sung thy worth in ev'ry vale,
 Her fathers pour'd the sage prophetic tale,
 But heav'n forbade—and fates untimely gave
 Our promis'd monarch to the barren grave!
 Yet in thy son these glorious lines we trace,
 And all the father's virtue warms his race:
 Tho' factions rouse the British world to arms,
 And fierce Bellona found her mad alarms,
 Aw'd by the virtues of the best of kings,
 The fury shall contract her harpy wings:
 Bright from the cloud their Genius break away,
 And concord spread as boundless as her sway.

A

M O N O D Y,

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF

E L I Z A B E T H,

DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

YET ONCE MORE, O! YE LAURELS—

MILTON,

2

A M O N O D Y,

Sacred to the Memory of ELIZABETH, Duchess of Northumberland.

W H A T meant that plaintive, choral swell,
 That from a thousand voices seem'd to rise,
 And spread in lessening murmurs thro' the skies?
 Big with what awful tale does yonder bell
 Exalt its burial note, and pour
 Its deep'ning music round the attentive shore?
 Smote by the hand that levels all,
 Another P E R C Y dies.
 But let no vulgar, impious tongue, presume
 The baleful tidings to relate,
 This blackest, bitterest stroke of fate,
 And break the eternal silence of the tomb.
 The dire event a nation's cries should tell,
 'Twas Britain's voice that wail'd her as she fell.
 'Twas Britain's voice—and all her weeping train
 Of orphans, widows mingled in the strain.
 What monument can raptur'd fancy raise
 To the fair memory of the wise and good,

T

(Tho'

(Tho' all the muses wak'd their loftiest lays,
 Tho' all the treasures of Potosi's mine
 Grac'd their proud bier, and sparkled round their shrine)
 Greater than virtue's tears, and Britain's praise?

You speechless, pale-eyed, sorrowing band,
 Whose tears and bursting sighs declare
 What heart-felt pangs your bosoms tear;
 Who shar'd her fortune, and her power,
 When famine crush'd you with his iron hand,
 When death's dire harpies, burning to devour,
 Disease and anguish, stalk'd around your bed,
 And shook their scorpions o'er your frightened head;
 Oh! Break your awful silence, and prolong
 In melting rhapsodies to PERCY's name,
 Your loftiest measures,—swell the choral song,
 Soar with her zeal, and glow with all her flame.
 With flattery's arts your lays ye need not stain,
 Nor let one venal lye debase the strain;
 Whate'er of daring or sublime,
 The fabling sons of Phœbus dream,
 To swell the lofty rage of rhyme,
 Shrinks from the grandeur of our brighter theme.
 The greenest bays that e'er the muses spread,
 To shade the ashes of the mighty dead,

Fade at the light of Virtue's living ray ;
 Where the rapt soul to nobler views aspires,
 And as on eagle wing she breaks away,
 From her frail tenement of mould'ring clay,
 Pants with diviner rage, and burns with brighter fires.

What tho' thro' thy illustrious veins,
 From many a godlike ancestor roll'd down,
 And many a chief, of high renown,
 That fought on Agincourt's and Cressy's plains,
 The rich, patrician stream un sullied flowed ;
 Though thy proud race with lengthen'd splendours shine,
 And monarchs mingle in the mighty line,
 These were but humblest trophies to thy name,
 Had not thy spirit caught the kindred flame,
 Had not thy breast with rival virtue glow'd.

Beneath thy smiles reviving science rear'd
 With fairer lustre her immortal head,
 The sons of genius hail'd thy bounteous hand,
 That oft the night of black misfortune chear'd ;
 And every nobler art its influence spread,
 In wider circles, round a favour'd land.

Rise, * thou dear child of Fancy and the Nine,
 Whom Nature, at thy awful birth endow'd
 With rage to soar beyond the rhyming crowd;
 And kindled in thy breast the spark divine,
 That flash'd resistless thro' thy rapid line;
 O! torn for ever from our longing eyes,
 Whom all Parnassus widow'd springs,
 And all Castalia's weeping grottoes mourn,
 From the cold cypress bowers of death arise,
 And seize once more thy flumbering lyre,
 And deeply smite its magic strings!
 Let gratitude a nobler song inspire,
 Than burst, with sacred energy of sound,
 When Cambria's cliffs, and Conway's listening tide,
 Heard their hoar prophet raise his thundering strain,
 To blast the tyrant Edward's banner'd pride;
 Whose streaming hands, with wanton vengeance red,
 Reek'd with the blood of bards unjustly slain.
 His powerful verse hath broke the spell of death:
 Mark where, slow-rising from their rocky bed,
 In stoles of white the bearded spectres rise,
 And scud like lightning o'er the desert heath,
 And point their hostile torches at his head.

* This alludes to a particular instance of kindness shewn by her Grace to the late Mr. Gray.

Such deathless strains to PERCY's memory raise,
 And let thy wild harp labour in her praise.
 O could they burst death's adamantine chain,
 And give her to the weeping world again !
 Thy pencil's animated touch alone
 Can draw the living portrait of her mind ;
 Where ev'ry gentle female grace combin'd,
 Where ev'ry gen'rous manly virtue shone ;
 As thou who shar'd her bounty best can tell,
 That rais'd her name as much above her kind,
 As thy bold lays each meaner muse excel.

Ye who by birth or fortune's varying smile
 Distinguish'd shine, the guardians of our isle ;
 Whether ye swell the Senate's awful band,
 Where Lyttelton, in thoughts sublime and strong,
 Rolls the full stream of eloquence along—
 Or high on glory's glittering summits stand
 Where all the virtues dart their blended rays,
 Diffusing round the throne their central blaze,
 And guide the scepter of supreme command ;
 O dare to emulate your sov'reign's zeal,
 In truth's, in wisdom's cause with PERCY glow :
 These are the basis of a nation's weal,
 From these renown and lasting transport flow—

Haste to the couch where drooping merit pines,
 Where pale disease the languid head reclines;
 Bid laurels round the brow of genius bloom,
 And snatch expiring virtue from the tomb.

Fain would the muse each generous deed rehearse,
 And bid them flourish in immortal verse :
 To latest times display thy virtuous fame,
 Till wondering ages kindle at thy name :
 With all thy spirit warm the glowing line,
 Mark how the patriot, how the Christian shine;
 Trace thee thro' each fond scene of private life,
 In all the tender names of friend and wife;
 Paint thee in ev'ry milder charm confess'd,
 And all the parent burning in thy breast :
 But what exhaustless toil can number o'er
 The sands that swell the deep's extended shore,
 Or in the desert wastes of Lybia rise,
 When dusky whirlwinds sweep along the skies;
 And what bold tongue shall e'er resound
 The boundless tale of thy exalted worth,
 That brightening every object round,
 Shot forth its beams conspicuous as thy birth :

Nor

Nor did those beams with partial splendor fall,
But like the source of light, they shone on all.

Daughters of Jove, your mournful lays forbear;
Some song of magic virtue dare,
To chase the fullen blackness of despair,
And sooth the grief-struck partner of her bed:
Whose inexpressive sorrows flow,
In all the speechless agony of woe,
O'er the cold ashes of the unconscious dead,
From the rich treasures of your tuneful art,
Some soft medicinal balm prepare,
Sweeter than all the breathing gums that shed
Their wanton fragrance thro' Arabian air,
To heal the anguish of his bleeding heart.
To kindred worth sweep all your warbling lyres,
O wake some tender, thrilling, dying strain;
Till rapture trembles from the quivering wires,
And softer anguish throbs thro' every vein:
Then, as each ruder passion sinks to rest,
With scenes of martial ardor warm his breast,
And point his wondering eye to yonder plain;
Where in insulted Britain's glorious cause,
His dauntless son * the sword of justice draws:

* Earl Percy; then serving in America.

And as his great forefathers tower'd in arms,
 Pants in the midst of battle's fierce alarms,
 With eager hope to gain the glittering prize,
 Which glory holds to valour's ravish'd view :
 Their lightning-terrors kindle in his eyes,
 And in his breast their ardors blaze anew.

'Tis done ;—and lo! the mitred prelate stands,
 The sacred volume trembling in his hands,
 The last sad obsequies prepar'd to pay,
 As the deep chorus chaunt the according lay,
 And render to the ravenous grave,
 That yawns to clasp her in its cold embrace,
 What erst to crowded courts their lustre gave,
 The boast at once and pattern of her race.
 Grandeur approach, this awful spot survey,
 And learn a lesson from the shrouded dead ;
 The rolling years urge on thy swift decay,
 And thou shalt slumber on the same cold bed.—
 Ha! dost thou shudder at the awful tale ?
 Does thy lip quiver, and thy cheek turn pale ?
 Or say, do glory's charms thy thoughts beguile ?
 Does beauty lull thee with her softer smile ?

Yet

Yet know,—and let these sounds like thunder roll
 Thro' all the deep recesses of thy soul;
 The sparkling eyes in death shall quench their fire,
 And all thy splendors in the dust expire.

Mark where, attended by the myriad throng,
 That anxious press around the mournful bier,
 Unable to restrain the starting tear,
 Death's awful train in silence move along:
 Pale-glimmering torches thro' the dusky air,
 On every face their funeral splendors glare,
 And kindle in the skies a milder day,
 As to yon dome * they bend their dreary way,
 That rears its Gothic towers, so steep and hoar;
 Where Britain's nobles strew the sacred floor,
 And monarchs moulder with their kindred clay.
 But hark! the loud inspiring organ blows,
 And pours its labour'd harmony around!
 From their eternal thrones of light,
 Studded with burning sapphires bright,
 Descending seraphs propagate the sound,

* Westminster-Abbey.

U

And

And swell with transports of celestial love :
 Her purer spirit mingling in their train,
 Dissolves in ecstacies unknown before;
 Then seeks with them a happier, brighter shore :
 On lightning pinions cleaves yon spangled plain,
 And glows for ever in the quires above.

A FREE
TRANSLATION
OF THE
OEDIPUS TYRANNUS
OF
SOPHOCLES.

A THREE

TRANSITION

OF THE

REDIPIUS TYRANNUS

OF

JOHN OGLE

U.S.

P R E F A C E.

THE Tragedy of which I have attempted to convey the beauties into the English language in a free translation, stands amidst the foremost of the classical productions of antiquity. Of tragical writing it has ever been esteemed the model and the master-piece. The grandeur of the subject is not less eminent than the dignity of the personages who are employed in it; and the design of the whole can only be rivalled by that art with which the particular parts are conducted. The subject is a nation labouring under calamities of the most dreadful and portentous kind; and the leading character is a wise and mighty prince, expiating by his punishment the involuntary crimes of which those calamities were the effect. The design is of the most interesting and important nature, to inculcate a due moderation in our passions, and an implicit obedience to that providence of which the decrees are equally unknown and irresistible.

So sublime a composition could not fail to secure the applause, and fix the admiration of ages. The philosopher is exercised in the contemplation of its deep and awful morality; the critic is captivated by its dramatic beauties, and the man of feeling is interested by those strokes of genuine passion which prevail in almost every page—which every character excites, and every new event tends to diversify in kind or in degree.

The

The three grand unities of time, place, and action, are observed with scrupulous exactness. However complicate its various parts may on the first view appear, on a nearer and more accurate examination we find every thing useful, every thing necessary; some secret spring of action laid open, some momentous truth inculcated, or some important end promoted: not one scene is superfluous, nor is there one Episode that could be retrenched. The successive circumstances of the play arise gradually and naturally one out of the other, and are connected with such inimitable judgment, that if the smallest part were taken away the whole would fall to the ground. The principal objection to this tragedy is, that the punishment of Oedipus is much more than adequate to his crimes: that his crimes are only the effect of his ignorance, and that consequently the guilt of them is to be imputed not to Oedipus, but Apollo, who ordained and predicted them, and that he is only *Phæbi reus*, as Seneca expresses himself. In vindication of Sophocles, it must be considered that the conduct of Oedipus is by no means so irreproachable as some have contended: for though his public character is delineated as that of a good king, anxious for the welfare of his subjects, and ardent in his endeavours to appease the gods by incense and supplication, yet we find him in private life choleric, haughty, inquisitive; impatient of controul, and impetuous in resentment. His character, even as a king, is not free from the imputation of imprudence, and our opinion of his piety is greatly invalidated by his contemptuous treatment of the wise, the benevolent, the sacred Tiresias. The rules of tragic art scarcely permit that a perfectly virtuous man should be loaded with misfortunes. Had Sophocles presented to our view a character less debased by vice, or more exalted by virtue, the end of his performance would have been frustrated; instead of agonizing

nizing compassion, he would have raised in us indignation unmixed, and horror unabated. The intention of the poet would have been yet more frustrated on the return of our reason, and our indignation would have been transferred from Oedipus to the gods themselves—from Oedipus, who committed parricide, to the gods who first ordained, and then punished it. By making him criminal in a small degree, and miserable in a very great one, by investing him with some excellent qualities, and some imperfections, he at once inclines us to pity and to condemn. His obstinacy darkens the lustre of his other virtues; it aggravates his impiety, and almost justifies his sufferings. This is the doctrine of Aristotle and of nature, and shews Sophocles to have had an intimate knowledge of the human heart, and the springs by which it is actuated. That his crimes and punishment still seem disproportionate, is not to be imputed as a fault to Sophocles, who proceeded only on the antient and popular notion of Destiny; which we know to have been the basis of Pagan theology.

It is not the intention of the Translator to proceed farther in a critical discussion of the beauties and defects of a Tragedy which hath already employed the pens of the most distinguished commentators; which hath wearied conjecture, and exhausted all the arts of unnecessary and unprofitable defence. The Translator is no stranger to the merits of Dr. Franklin; whose character he reveres, and by whose excellent performance he has been animated and instructed. He thinks it necessary to disclaim every idea of rivalry with an author of such established and exalted reputation. The present translation, though it be executed with far less ability than that of Doctor Franklin, may deserve some notice, because
professedly

professedly written on very different principles. The Doctor was induced by his plan, and enabled by his erudition, to encounter all the difficulties of *literal* translation. This work will be found by the reader, what it is called by the writer, a *free* translation. The Author was not fettered by his text, but guided by it; he has however not forgotten the boundaries by which liberal translation is distinguished from that which is wild and licentious. He has always endeavoured to represent the sense of his original, he hopes sometimes to have caught its spirit, and he throws himself without reluctance, but not without diffidence, on the candour of those readers who understand and feel the difference that subsists between the Greek and English languages, between antient and modern manners, between nature and refinement, between a Sophocles who appeals to posterity, and a writer who catches at the capricious taste of the day.

THE ARGUMENT.

Oedipus, the supposed son of Polybus, king of Corinth, leaves the palace of his father upon a reflection thrown on his birth by a courtier, to consult the oracle at Delphi concerning his parents. In his journey he meets Laius, king of Thebes, his real father, but unknown to him, in a narrow avenue, and being opposed by him, kills him and his attendants. He afterwards solves the riddle of the Sphynx, a monster that laid the country of Thebes waste with her ravages, and, as his reward, is promoted to the throne, vacant by the death of Laius, and to the bed of Jocasta, his own mother. A dreadful pestilence rages among the Thebans, and, Creon being sent to consult the oracle, brings back this answer. "That, when they shall have banished the murderer of Laius, then resident among them, the plague should cease." Oedipus, anxious to discover the offender, and to revenge his death, denounces the most solemn curses both against the culprit and those who conceal him. After variety of investigation, Oedipus himself is discovered to be the murderer. In his rage he tears out his eyes, and Jocasta, unable to bear the reflection of her impurity, destroys herself.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Oedipus,	■	■	King of Thebes.
Jocasta,	-	■	Wife of Oedipus.
Creon,	-	■	Brother to Jocasta.
Tiresias,	-	■	A blind Prophet of Thebes.
Corinthian Shepherd.			
Shepherd formerly belonging to Laius.			
Messenger.			
High Priest of Jupiter.			

CHORUS. Consisting of the Priests and antient Men of Thebes,
Theban Youths and Children of Oedipus.

SCENE, The Area before the Palace of Oedipus; where the
Priests are assembled before the Altars,

OEDIPUS

OEDIPUS TYRANNUS.

A C T I.

OEDIPUS, the PRIEST, CREON, CHORUS.

OEDIPUS.

OFFSPRING of antient Cadmus, wherefore thus
 With suppliant branches press you round our palace?
 The temples smook with incense, all our streets
 Resound with mournful pæans, and with bursts
 Of frantic woe—Behold your prince himself,
 Ev'n Oedipus, by ev'ry tongue renown'd,
 Anxious, impatient, hastes to learn the cause
 Of these commotions: Say, thou rev'rend seer,
 Whose years and wisdom claim my first regard,
 Say, what disasters, what unseen distress
 Involve my people: have the wrathful gods
 Pour'd down their vengeance for some hidden crime,
 Or hath some plunderer laid your city waste?
 Say, for this arm shall yield you from his rage,

Or added incense soothe offended Jove.
 Steel'd were this heart, and ill should I deserve
 To wear the crown a grateful nation gave,
 Did I not sympathize in all their griefs,
 And risk my life and safety for their welfare.

PRIEST. Prince of this wretched land, thine eyes behold
 What prostrate throngs around thy altars poured,
 Implore thy succour from the jaws of death.
 Her unfledg'd * infant train their feeble hands
 Here suppliant stretch; there bend her chosen youth
 Renown'd in war—the venerable race
 To these succeed, who guard our sacred rites,
 Hoary with age and grief: the priest of Jove
 Bows prostrate at thy feet: O king, attend
 Thy subjects cries, who rush in gathering throngs
 To where the temples of Minerva † rise,
 And where Ismenus her prophetic stream
 Rolls by Apollo's shrine: their sacred boughs
 Waving in air and weary heav'n with plaints.

* The words in the original are: οὐδὲ πω μακρὰν πτέσθαι σθένοντες; literally, not able to fly a long way.

† In Thebes there were two temples of Pallas; one in honour of Minerva the afflister; the other in honour of the Ismenian Minerva.

* Our ancient city, like a shatter'd wreck,
 When all the fury of the tempest rages,
 Sinks in the flood that swells to overwhelm her.
 A savage pestilence with horrid strides
 Stalks thro' our streets, and rushing from the skies
 Avenging Phœbus scatters o'er the land
 His burning arrows, while the gloomy grave,
 Enrich'd with groans and death, exults to view
 Such myriads croud his desolate domain.
 Parch'd by the blast the ripening harvest dies,
 Our fields are strewn with putrid carcases
 That lie unburied, and still wider spread
 The foul contagion : dismal screams are heard
 Of women labouring with untimely birth,
 Who curse the monstrous product of their womb.
 O second only to the immortal gods
 In wisdom and in might, extend thy arm
 To save our sinking race ; arise, O prince,
 Shine forth, as when thy glorious presence burst
 The sphynx's dark ænigma, and releas'd

* This comparison of a state, struggling under calamity, to a ship in distress, is to be met with in many both of the Greek and Roman classics ; it occurs again in the speech of Jocasta at the opening of the third act, or what the critics call so, for this division into acts was unknown to the Grecian stage.

From death and servitude our drooping foul,
 To life, to health and safety—prince, to thee
 We raise our anxious eyes; once more be call'd
 The saviour of our race: in this dark hour,
 If thy prophetic skill may ought avail:
 For oft the counsels of the wise avert
 The threaten'd ill. Let not oblivion shade
 Thy former godlike deeds. This city stands
 The great recording herald of thy fame:
 Act like thyself; and know, illustrious fire,
 A kingdom's strength consists not in extent
 Of vast domains, and bulwarks rais'd to heav'n;
 The people are its strength, and when these fail,
 Its fleets are useless, and its bulwarks vain.

OED. Alas! my sons, ye urge not your complaints
 Unknown or unregarded; well I know
 The various labours that oppress the state:
 Nor hath your sov'reign borne amidst you all
 The slightest share of woe. Still have I felt
 For every pang the meanest subject knows.
 This breast, where all your cares a center find,
 Feels no repose, but bears an empire's toils.
 Whether by night upon my couch I lie,

Or

Or thron'd in regal pomp. All-seeing Jove,
 Witness the tears I shed, the sighs I pour.
 How rove my thoughts in mazy wand'rings lost,
 Some med'cine to explore for bleeding Thebes.
 What prudence bade I fail'd not to perform
 With early speed: to Delphi's shrine I sent
 Creon, my noble relative and friend,
 To seek of Jove, what dark unpurg'd offence
 Hath stain'd the land; what offering may atone,
 And mitigate the wrath of angry Heav'n.
 My soul is big with terror while I wait
 The God's decree: the time of his return
 Is near elaps'd, and may the curse be mine
 If I not execute in all its force
 The dread behest.

PRIEST. Auspicious are thy words;
 These youths pronounce, that Creon is arriv'd.

OED. O great Apollo! Grant his chearful looks
 Be the fair omen of thy smile restor'd.

PRIEST. Thus may we well divine, for bright indeed
 His aspect; and around his temples wave
 The joyful laurels †.

OED. What his tidings, soon

† When the person, who was sent to consult the oracle, returned crowned with laurel, it was a sign of his having received a favourable answer.

He will himself unfold; illustrious prince,
What answer bear'st thou from the shrines of Delphi?

CRE. Most happy, if the voice of wisdom guide
The sons of Thebes: the storm that now impends,
Threat'ning her overthrow, will soon subside.

OED. Mysterious are thy words; my anxious mind
Fluctuates 'midst doubt and terror.

CRE. If my liege
Command me to declare the will of Jove,
Before this great assembly, I obey:
Or in the private chambers of the palace,
Submissive wait his will.

OED. Declare aloud
The sov'rain will: for know, my peoples grief
Oppress me more than all my private woes.

CRE. Reveal'd shall be the whole—The God comn
To drive from out our land the baleful source
Of these our sufferings; nor to nourish more
A wretch, accurst by all the pow'rs of Heav'n.

OED. What wretch?—declare, how shall we soothe his rage

CRE. Let banishment, or instant death arrest
His guilty steps; 'tis blood, 'tis blood, my friends,

A murder'd

A murder'd king's unexpiated blood,
Hath laid our country waste.

OED. Whose blood? Explain
This hideous mystery!

CRE. Know, illustrious prince,
Ere thou wast seated on the throne of Thebes,
Laius our monarch held the reins of empire.

OED. Report hath told me so; I knew him not.

CRE. This prince unjustly slain, the pow'rs above
Command us to avenge, and drag to light
The base assassins.

OED. Ha! where lurk the traitors?
How shall we trace this foul and murd'rous deed
To its dark source?—but say, where fell the prince?

CRE. In this same land he fell; let guards be sent
T' explore the country, lest he 'scape by flight:
Our early vigilance may save an empire.

OED. Declare the time, and manner of his death;
Each circumstance recall to mind; in Thebes
Met he this fate, or in a foreign land?

CRE. He went (as was reported) to consult
Some distant oracle, but ne'er return'd
To fill his vacant throne.

OED. But did no slave,

No messenger of all his train return,
To spread these tidings of your sov'reign's death?

CRE. One only 'scap'd by flight, the rest all fell,
Amidst the general slaughter: him his fright
Permitted but in memory to retain
One trivial circumstance.

OED. Say, what was that?
One glimmering spark may light us on our way
Thro' all this maze of guilt.

CRE. That robbers slew him:
He fell not by a single ruffian's hand,
But by the power of multitudes combin'd.

OED. How could a band of robbers dare a deed,
So perilous?

CRE. Such were our surmizes then:
But thus unaided, unaveng'd, expir'd
The best of princes.

OED. Wherefore pried you not
Into this dark event with keener search?

CRE. 'Twas then the monster Sphinx to Thebes proposed
Her dire ænigma, and remoter cares
Were buried in the sense of present ills.

OED. Mine be the care; our grateful vows we pay,

First to * all-seeing Phœbus; next to thee,
 O prince, the warmest thanks of Thebes are due.
 Hence with your fears, your Oedipus once more
 Will stand the bulwark of your falling state.
 This arm shall drag the traitor from his covert;
 Not only for the sake of you, my friends,
 And this your murder'd sov'reign, but my own.
 Soon may the daring regicides attempt
 To murder me, my children, or my queen.
 Arise my sons, and henceforth throw aside
 Your suppliant boughs. Before these glowing altars
 Let heralds summon all the race of Cadmus,
 Phœbus our guide, together will we raise
 Our heads triumphant, or together sink
 In undistinguish'd ruin.

PRIEST. Yes, my sons,
 Arise, since thus our monarch hath resolv'd:
 May that immortal power, whose awful voice
 Utter'd the prophecy descend from Heav'n,
 Avenge our cause, and save expiring Thebes.

* Sol, qui terrarum flammæ opera omnia lustras.

C H O R U S.

S T R O P H E I.

Immortal, high, harmonious strain!
That arm'd with awful terrors from above,
Didst break from Delphi's golden fane,
Bearing to Thebes the dread command of Jove:
Thy sounds with terror fill my anxious breast.

To thee our forrowing pæans rise,
Patron and parent of the healing art.

Delian, O quickly cleave the skies,
Arm'd with thy quiver, thy unerring dart,
And purge our city from this raging pest.

A N T I S T R O P H E I.

Daughter of hope, fair child of light,
What great events in time's dark womb conceal'd,
Are now emerging to our sight;
Or wait the rolling hours to be reveal'd?

Thee, Pallas, thee, the guardian of our land,
We first invoke, and thee, whose shrine,
Fills our extended forum's ample space,

With these thine aid far-darting Phœbus join:
Haste, haste, auspicious, to our sinking race;
Pierce the dark fiend, and stay his wasteful hand.

STROPHE

S T R O P H E II.

The pride of Thebes is levell'd with the ground,
 The fruits of earth lie blasted on the plain :
 Her palaces with shrieks of death resound,
 And her streets groan beneath the heaps of slain.
 So wide hath spread the monster's fiery rage,
 Beauty's flush'd cheek with fatal crimson burns ;
 From her wild eye pernicious lightning glares :
 E'vn virtue's hallow'd plaint the tyrant spurns ;
 The screaming infant from the bosom tears,
 And strikes to earth the hoary scalp of age.

A N T I S T R O P H E II.

The mother with convulsive tortures torn,
 Faints 'midst her pains, and languishes in death.
 Her hapless infant curst as soon as born,
 Imbibes pollution with his earliest breath.
 But hark ! in louder bursts the pæans break ;
 The shores will wilder acclamations ring,]
 Mad with the flames that revel thro' their blood.
 Increasing throngs around our altars cling,
 And swift as rapid fire, or torrent flood,
 By myriads rush to Lethe's gloomy lake.

S T R O P H E III.

Bright offspring of the thunderer hear;
 Hear Pallas, from thy central throne of light,
 Seize thy dread shield, thy mighty spear,
 And hither, O! direct thy rapid flight.
 Enthron'd on high, with ruin by his side,

This ravager, who spurns the mail of war,
 Hath slain thy people, and thy groves defil'd.

O! dash him from his fiery car,
 Drive him far hence to Scythia's rocky wild,
 Or deep ingulph him in the Thracian tide.

A N T I S T R O P H E III.

But chief, dread ruler of the skies,
 Bare thou thine arm, with keener lightnings red,
 Omnipotent! in vengeance rise,
 And let those lightnings blast his impious head.
 Monarch of Lydia, stretch thy mighty hand,

Bid thy unconquer'd shafts the monster rend;
 O thou, whose darts Lyceum's summits fire,

O Bacchus, crown'd with chaplets, hither bend—
 Bacchus, who lov'st to join the madd'ning quire,
 Rush on th' accursed * god, and drive him from the land.

* Απότιμον ἐν θεοῖς θεόν.

A god accurst among the gods.

A C T II.

OEDIPUS, CHORUS, TIRESIAS.

OEDIPUS.

WHATE'ER my subjects justly can demand,
 To grant is my ambition : therefore hear
 My words obedient ; so shall we obtain
 Relief from heav'n, and expiate our offence.
 I knew not 'till this day the dire event,
 Not ev'n report had told me ; but there seem
 Some sure, tho' secret traces, that may lead
 To full detection of this monstrous crime.
 Hear then this last resolve, which I, your king,
 (Who glory in the name of citizen)
 To all the citizens of ample Thebes
 Aloud proclaim. If any subject know
 By whom the son of Labdacus was slain,
 'Tis my command that instant he reveal
 The fatal secret : let not dread of death
 Restrain him, for the murd'rer shall not die :
 His exile shall alone suffice to pay

The debt of vengeance; if by foreign hand
 His blood was spilt, whoever brings to light
 The traiterous parricide the sons of Thebes
 With lavish honours shall reward his zeal.
 But if, from friendship, or whatever cause,
 He screen the murderer, let him ponder well
 His dreadful doom. We further then command
 That none thro' all our wide domain receive
 A monster so defil'd: that none hold converse,
 In word or action, with him: drive him out
 From all your temples: let him not approach
 Your solemn sacrifices, nor partake
 The sacred sprinklings: but pursue, pursue,
 With loudest execrations thro' the land
 The universal pest: this awful curse
 The god of Delphi thunders on his head.
 If some bold ruffian singly dar'd the deed,
 Or leagued with numbers, be they still accurst;
 May poverty exhaust their weary lives;
 The sports of pain, and victims of disease!
 If in this palace I conceal the traitor,
 Show'r down, ye heav'ns, these curses on the head
 Of Oedipus, and all his perjur'd race.

Not heav'n alone, the virtues of your king
 Command this tribute; I am bound to pay
 The debt of ample justice to his manes.
 I, who enjoy his scepter and his bed,
 And, had not unrelenting fate oppos'd
 His fond desires, had shar'd his * children too——
 Urg'd by a son's regard, I will avenge
 This best of princes: smile ye mighty names
 That laid the basis of this tow'ring empire,
 Cadmus, Agenor, for I *will* avenge
 The blood of your descendant. Are there yet,
 Among the sons of Thebes, who wish to screen
 So base a parricide: thou parent earth,
 Ope not the treasures of thy fruitful womb
 To this ungrateful race: curst be their beds,
 And barren; curst the produce of their toil,
 'Till the same fate shall crush their impious heads.
 Justice divine, and ye immortal powers
 Who guard the innocent, assist our cause,
 The cause of virtue and of injur'd kings.

CHOR. Prince, may each curse thy lips have now pronounced,
 Alight on me, if, conscious to the fact,
 I screen the murderer, or abet his cause.

* The introduction of this circumstance has a striking effect: Laius had a child, and that child was Oedipus; though his being exposed was kept as secret as his birth.

But the bright power, who utter'd the decree,
Can best explain its meaning.

OED. Just, O sage:

But if the god incline not to reveal it,
Who shall extort the secret from a power
Arm'd with omnipotence?

CHOR. Will then my liege
Attend an old man's counsel?

OED. Speak, if aught
Thy mind conceives, of import to the state.

CHO. In wisdom equall'd by the gods alone,
The hoary seer, Tiresias, may unfold
Its hidden purport.

OED. Creon thus advised;
And messengers have twice been sent to summon
The rev'rend prophet; at his strange delay
I wonder much.

CHO. 'Tis well; for other tales,
Various and vague are rumour'd of his death.

OED. What are they, say? For I should know them all
To judge aright.

CHO. They say the prince was slain
By travellers.

OED. This hath likewise reach'd my ears;
But who hath yet appear'd to prove the fact?

CHO.

CHO. If he exist on earth, thy menaces
Will force the conscious villain to confess.

OED. Whoever dar'd the execrable deed
Will not be startled at the impending curse.

CHO. But this way, lo! they lead the holy seer,
Who can alone disclose the fatal truth.

OED. All-wise Tiresias! Thou, whose mighty mind
Can pierce the dark, mysterious depths of fate,
Whatever in the womb of night, unborn,
Or what, amidst the great decrees of heav'n,
Lies hid from mortal ken: tho' dim the rays
Of outward sight, yet well thy mental eye
Beholds the toils of Thebes, whose anxious sons
Call thee to be their saviour: for when late
We fought at Delphi's shrine the will of Jove,
Thus spake the eternal voice: "With instant death
" Or everlasting exile, fine the wretch
" That murder'd Laius: this command obey'd,
" The plague shall cease to desolate your land."
O! therefore, if thy sage, prophetic skill,
From birds or ominous signs can ought divine,
From swift destruction snatch thyself and Thebes;
Avenge a murder'd prince; and thy reward
Reap in a nation's pray'rs, and those pure joys

The virtuous feel, in aiding the distressed.

TIR. How fatal knowledge proves, when thus to know
Is to be doubly wretched! when, to speak,
And to be silent, tire alike the source
Of bitterest grief! O had I ne'er approach'd—

OED. What dreadful secret labours in thy breast,
Darkening thy brow?

TIRES. Dismiss me from thy presence;
Thy future peace and mine depend upon it.

OED. 'Twere base ingratitude to Thebes, who bore
And nourish'd thee, to hide the will of Jove
At this dread crisis.

TIRES. Rash, rash prince, forbear,
Lest I too suddenly that will disclose.

OED. O by the gods reveal it, if thou know'st;
Suppliant we all beseech thee.

TIRES. Urge no more
The knowledge of those woes that, ah! too soon
Will burst upon thee.

OED. How? Know'st thou our fate,
Yet seal'st thy lip in silence; thus betraying
Thy prince and country?

TIRES. Yes, my lips are seal'd:

Beware

Beware thy base suspicions tempt me not
To break that silence.

OED. I can hold no longer.
Traitor, since thou art deaf to our intreaties,
Thou shalt reveal it, for I'll force it from thee.

TIRES. Thou blame'st my conduct; heedless that thy own
Ungovernable temper least becomes
This sacred place.

OED. Who can restrain his rage,
That sees thee treat, with insolent contempt,
A nation's cries?

TIRES. What, on the book of fate,
The hand of Jove hath grav'd, shall come to pass,
Tho' I remain in everlasting silence.

OED. But duty to thy country calls upon thee
To speak her doom.

TIRES. Still let thy tongue rail on;
Thy fiercest rage shall never tear it from me.

OED. I then will speak—for if aright I judge,
Thyself wert conscious to this deed of horror:
Nay, had thine eyes retain'd their light, I think,
Wouldst with thine own base hand have done it too.

TIRES. Hear me, proud prince—the curse thou hast pronounc'd
On thine own head recoils: murd'rer, avaunt——
For from this day, this day of thy disgrace,

The meanest slave shall spurn thee as profane,
Accurst by heav'n, and sacred to its rage.

OED. Miscreant, and hop'st thou for this daring insult
To go unscourg'd?

TIRES. Tyrant, I scorn thy threats;
Truth is my fortress, and, against thy power,
Girds me, as with a coat of adamant.

OED. But tell me from what source thy knowledge springs
From thy prophetic art?

TIRES. Nay, from thyself:
Thy haughty treatment forced me to reveal it.

OED. Once more then with the sound refresh my soul.

TIRES. Wilt thou provoke me farther; was my meaning
Hid in ambiguous phrase?

OED. Nay, but repeat
Thy wonderful tale.

TIRES. I tell thee then again,
Thou art that wretch, that murderer whom thou seek'st—

OED. By heav'ns, thou shalt not twice insult thy prince
And go unpunish'd.

TIRES. Should I tell thee more,
How would'st thou madden!

OED. Speak it all, for all
Is one rank forgery.

TIRES. Know, unholy fires

Within that foul, unconscious bosom burn :
Nor heed'st thou that the partner of thy joys
Shall prove ere long the source of all thy woes.

OED. Still shall thy tongue spit forth its dark abuse
Against thy sovereign.

TIRES. I regard thee not,
While truth remains my shield.

OED. Traitor, thou ly'st—
Truth never harbour'd in so base a soul;
Blacken'd by every crime, and like thy form
Involv'd in total night.

TIRES. Beware the taunt,
That soon, with triple force, shall fall on thee.

OED. Thy blindness is thy safeguard, or long since
This arm had punish'd thy abuse with death.

TIRES. Still I defy thee, for thy murderous sword
Shall never drink my blood—The gods protect me.

OED. Was this base falsehood forg'd by thee or Creon?

TIRES. By neither; as thy fate too soon shall prove.

OED. Painful pre-eminence of wealth and power,
And wisdom, last, best, noblest gift of heav'n!
Since envy thus pursues to blast the steps
Of all that's fair or excellent on earth :
This crown, unsought by me, which grateful Thebes

Placed

Placed on my brow, that basest of mankind,
 Creon, Whom late I deem'd my firmest friend,
 Would ravish from me, and hath here suborn'd
 This curst magician, this vile son of fraud,
 This wily, wand'ring, subtle hypocrite,
 This base impostor, * blind to ev'ry sense
 But that of gain, with crimes of blackest die
 To load my name, and fully all my glory!
 Tell me, thou vaunting prophet, where wast thou
 When the fell Sphynx her dark mysterious song
 Propos'd to Thebes: speak, dotard, for to solve
 Her dire ænigma, ask'd methinks at least
 A prophet's pow'r——Then Oedipus arose,
 And, without aid of dreams, or auguries,
 But by the native vigour of a soul
 That pierces thine, and Creon's dark designs,
 Whose bold ambition aims to seize my crown,
 Solv'd the dire riddle----but beware, impostor,
 Thou and thy traitor friend, I say, beware!
 Or dearly ye shall rue the wild attempt.
 And did not years protect thee from my rage,
 I should, ere now, have taught thee not to rouse
 The wrath of kings.

CHO. If to decide be mine,

* —Οστις ἐν τοῖς κέρδεσσιν
 Μόνον δέδορκε.—

Ye both are heated with intemperate warmth,
 Heav'n can alone decide; let then our prayers,
 United seek the succour of the gods.

TIRES. What, tho' a mighty empire wait thy nod,
 A monarch is but man, and I, as man,
 Am not inferior to the proudest prince.
 Nor thee nor Creon, 'tis the gods I serve,
 But since my blindness wakes thy insult—hear
 A tale shall shake thy inmost soul with horror.
 Know then, a tenfold darkness veils thy mind,
 And tho' thine eyes now drink the noon-tide ray,
 The time is near when they shall quench their orbs
 In everlasting night! *Blind* wretch, thou knowest not
 The long, long train of black calamities,
 Whose scorpion stings shall wake thee into madness—
 Thou know'st not that incestuous transports stain
 Thy guilty couch, and that a father's blood
 Calls from the grave for vengeance: that thy plaints
 Of frantic woe, shall ring thro' ev'ry shore,
 And ev'ry mountain * a Cithæron prove.

* Cithæron was the mountain on which Oedipus was exposed. There is a horrid grandeur, and local propriety in the original here, which could not well be expressed in a translation. I have ventured to give it literally.

Serene * indeed, and steady was the gale
 That bore thy swelling sails to Thebes's throne,
 And to Jocasta's bed: vainly thou hop'st
 To anchor there in undisturb'd repose.
 The port thou ridest in with such pomp of sail,
 Shall wreck thee: once more give thee back
 To all the madness of the hurricane;
 Thy children too—thy children did I say!
 Thy breth'ren—they with curses shall repay
 Thy love, when they shall find themselves allied
 By guilty ties; from the same impious stem,
 Equally sprung—now let thy wanton tongue
 Exhaust its rage on Creon, and on me:
 I'll bear it all, but still I tell thee, prince,
 The sun beholds not in its wide survey,
 A wretch so guilty, so accurs'd as thou art.

OED. I will not further bear thy insolence,
 Be gone—haste from my presence, or by heav'n—

TIRES. I came not here unsummon'd.

OED. Think'st thou then,

I sent for thee, base miscreant, to insult me?

* To translate this passage with spirit and delicacy was no very easy task: The passage literally runs thus—"When thou shalt have discovered that marriage, into which thou hast sail'd with a fortunate gale, where thou didst expect joy and safety, other, yes, other evils yet impend, that shall at once equal thee to thyself and thy children." The obscurity is less horrid in the original, than the translation.

TIRES. Thou deem'st me fool and mad ; far otherwise
Thy parents thought.

OED. What say'st thou ? hah ! my parents—
Whom may I call by that dear name ?

TIRES. No more :
This day that gives thee life, shall prove to thee
The day of death.

OED. What thick obscurity
Involves thy ev'ry speech ?

TIRES. But thou perhaps,
Who solv'd the Sphinx's riddle, may'st unfold
Their mystery.

OED. Dost thou dare reproach me too
With what will ever be my greatest triumph ?

TIRES. That triumph seals thy ruin,

OED. 'Tis well then ;
I'll glory in my fall, since by that fall
I've sav'd a nation.

TIRES. Glory then ; farewell.
Boy, lead me hence.

OED. Aye, lead the dotard hence,
He but distracts our counsels.

TIRES. Prince, I go ;

But, ere I take of thee my last adieu,
 I will, in less mysterious terms, unfold
 Why came *this dotard* hither. Know once more
 The man on whom thy lips have thunder'd forth
 Such dreadful execrations, stands among us.
 Nor did a foreign country give him birth,
 At Thebes he drew his breath; that mark thou well,
 And mark—the day of vengeance is at hand.
 Tho' now he riot in the spoils of wealth,
 And shine in regal pomp, he shall not long—
 Blindness, and toil, and penury are his lot,
 To waste his days in barren solitudes :
 And, bending on a staff implore relief
 From passing travellers, who shall spurn him from them,
 As one accurst, a blot in nature's page.
 One, whom his own polluted race may call
 Their father and their brother; she who bore him,
 Her child and husband, and his murder'd fire,
 A son incestuous, and a parricide—
 Now go within thy palace, well revolve
 Each word: and if one word, one circumstance
 Fail, and convict me of imputed falsehood;
 My art prophetic scorn, my threats defy.

CHORUS.
STROPHE I.

Where lurks the murd'rous child of guilt,
By whose dark hand a monarch's blood was spilt ?
On whose devoted impious head
The Delphic rock its hallow'd curse hath shed.
Now let him mock in flight the rapid steed,
Mount * the swift storm, or seize the light'ning's speed ;
For, arm'd with all the wrath of Jove,
Whose bolts of fire the redd'ning æther rend,
Apollo rushes from above,
And rav'ning destinies his steps attend.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Where steep Parnassus, wrapt in snow,
Rears 'midst incumbent heav'n his hoary brow :
Thence came the mandate of the god
To drag the monster from his drear abode :
Whether in rocks and caves, with wand'ring feet,
Like the lone † bull he seek his dark retreat.
Vain hope ! his vengeful hand to fly,
That hand which guides the stedfast universe ;
To shun the light'ning of that eye
Whose searching beams its inmost center pierce.

* ἀλλοπιδων ἵππων ; horses whose feet are like storms in swiftness.

† This idea of the solitary bull is, in the original, peculiarly forcible ; Virgil likewise with the utmost delicacy and pathos, describes the wanderings of the despairing bull—

— — — Sed alter

Victus abit, longeque ignotis exulat oris.

Vide 3d Georg. 225.

S T R O P H E.

What sounds of horror strike mine ear?
The awful voice of yon prophetic seer:

Tidings of death to Thebes they bring,
Denouncing vengeance to her hapless king.
Within my breast conflicting passions roll,
Terror and doubt alternate shake my soul.

How by our monarch's hand could Laius bleed,
A stranger to that monarch's eyes;

Uninjur'd, unprovok'd, by word or deed?
Hence let me cast the base surmise.

A N T I S T R O P H E II.

The powers who search the human heart,
They can alone the dreadful truth impart;

While sway'd by rage, or rival hate,
Prophets may wrongly scan the page of fate.
Tho' high the sons of men in wisdom shine,
Mortals can never fathom truths divine.

Could he who late the bulwark stood,
From the fell Sphinx our city to relieve,

Defile his spear with royal blood?
'Twere guilt to think, and madness to believe.

And again,

Dura jacet pernox, instrato saxa cubili.

A C T

A C T III.

CREON, OEDIPUS, JOCASTA, CHORUS.

CREON.

THEBANS, I come to vindicate my fame
From the foul stains your king hath cast upon it.
In this dark moment, or by word or deed,
If Creon aught could aggravate your woes,
He were unworthy of the air he breathes;
For what is life, if I must live despised
By all my countrymen, and deemed a traitor?

CHORUS. 'Twas all the dictate of ungovern'd rage,
He could not think thee traitor.

CRE. Whence could spring
The base suspicion that, suborned by me,
The prophet utter'd lies?

CHO. Such were his words,
But whence his thoughts arose I cannot say.

CRE. Spoke he as if convinced?

CHO. 'Tis not my task
To penetrate the hidden thoughts of kings.
Ask him, behold he comes.

OED. Thou regicide!
Dar'st thou with all the hardness of guilt
Approach my palace; thou whose treasonous schemes

Had plann'd my death, and wouldst with rebel hand
Have torn my sceptre from me? Tell me, traitor!
Didst thou esteem me fool or coward most,
Not to perceive thy arts, or not revenge
This violation of the rights of princes.
I tell thee, thou art fool and madman too,
Whose wild ambition hurries thee away
In quest of empire, which the peoples voice
Alone can give, and pow'ful friends support.

CRE. When thou hast heard me, then will better judge
Whether I merit this severe reproach.

OED. I know thy subtle powers of argument,
But all the force of words shall ne'er convince me
Thou art not still my most inveterate foe.

CRE. Yet hear me.

OED. Talk not then of innocence.

CRE. Nay, if thou wilt not hear the voice of reason,
Thou grossly err'st.

OED. And thou thou more grossly still,
If for this treatment of an injur'd friend
Thou hop'st to pass unpunished.

CRE. Prove the crime,
I will not murmur at the punishment.

OED. Insidious traitor! didst thou not advise
To summon hither this all-seeing prophet?

CRE.

CRE. Mine was the counsel, and in like suspense
Should be repeated.

OED. Speak, what length of time
Hath Laius—

CRE. What of Laius?

OED. Thus been * slain
By hands unknown?

CRE. A long extent of years.

OED. But tell me, did Tiresias then possess
This power of prophecy?

CRE. Alike he shone,
Renown'd in wisdom, and alike rever'd.

OED. Aught did he then predict concerning me.

CRE. It never reach'd my ear.

OED. What! fought ye not
The author of the murder?

CRE. Yes; but all
Prov'd fruitless.

OED. Why did this impostor then,
So high renown'd, disclose not this fell secret?

CRE. Silence doth best become the ignorant.
I can return no answer.

OED. But of this,
At least, thou art the judge.

CRE. Of what? O speak;

* The word is *ῥέει*, *flow'd away*; an expression most forcible in the original.

For if I can resolve thy doubts I will.

OED. Thou know'st then, if this prophet of deceit
Had not been wrought on by thy artful wiles,
He ne'er had dar'd accuse me of this crime.

CRE. If this the seer hath done, the task is thine
To vindicate thyself: but of my crimes
I still am ignorant.

OED. Thy crimes? ask him.
But know—all, all thy arts shall never prove
Thy prince a murderer!

CRE. Hast thou not espous'd
My sister?

OED. Yes, what then?

CRE. With pow'r supreme
Reign you not jointly o'er the sons of Thebes?

OED. She shares at once my kingdom and my heart;
Her will is mine: but thou——

CRE. Do I not stand
The third in dignity?

OED. Most undeservedly;
Thou hast betray'd thy friend.

CRE. Restrain awhile
The transport of thy rage, and be convinc'd.
Where is the man, who, blest with all that kings

And

And empires can bestow, without their cares,
 Would barter for the pageant of a name,
 That peace of mind which, empires with their wealth
 Can never purchase, or when lost, restore?
 I am not mad enough to wish the change,
 Nor hath a scepter such alluring charms
 To draw me from that purpose, while I share
 The highest power a subject can enjoy,
 Or prince confer: monarchs are oft the slaves
 Of factious nobles, oft resign their crowns
 At the mad ravings of the tyrant vulgar—
 I fear them not; suppliant they crouch to me,
 All who to fortune, or to pow'r aspire,
 And seek thy smile. Shall I this solid good
 Quit for a shadow? No, thou wrong'st me much.
 I scorn the name of traitor, and would bare
 The murderous plot to light, if aught I knew
 Of lurking treason. Dost thou doubt my truth,
 Go learn it of the Delphic oracles;
 And, if I have deceiv'd thee, let me suffer
 All the collective wrath of heav'n and thee.
 Shall prejudice usurp the force of truth,
 And shall a monarch, fam'd like Oedipus
 For wisdom as for virtue, doom to shame,

On blind suspicion's most fallacious test,
 His bosom friend? Remember, prince, the name
 Of friend is sacred, and, to lose a friend,
 A greater ill than loss of life itself.
 My innocence time only can attest:
 But wait with temper; for tho' curtain'd guilt
 Is soon unveil'd, to heal the wounded fame
 Of injur'd virtue asks a longer period.

CHO. Calm thee, O king; nor let thy rage transport thee
 Beyond the bounds of reason: rash resolves
 Are often dearly rued.

OED. What! when the sword
 Is lifted to my throat, must I submit,
 With passive tameness, to the stroke that rends
 My empire from me, and, with empire, life?

CRE. Rash, haughty man, what will appease thy rage?
 My exile?

OED. No, thy death.

CRE. Must I then die
 Without one proof of guilt?

OED. Thy death, I say,
 Alone can satisfy my just revenge.

CRE. Thou ravest!

OED. I speak the purpose of my heart.

CRE.

CRE. If so, 'tis prudent I consult my safety.

OED. Thou traitor!

CRE. But thou hast not prov'd me such.

OED. Absolute is a king, and his commands
Must be obey'd.

CRE. If founded on injustice,
They ought to be resisted unto death.

OED. Thebes, hear'st thou this?

CRE. Yes, hears and triumphs too.
I am her son; she taught my infant soul
The glorious precept.

CHO. Princes, cease your strife;
Jocasta hither from the palace bends:
Cease, or make her the umpire of your cause.

Joc. Whence rose this tumult? Thoughtless, cruel men,
Have you combin'd to multiply our griefs,
And plunge your country deeper in despair?
Let each in silence to his home depart,
Nor, with your private, swell the public woes.

CRE. Sister, thy lord hath basely injur'd me;
Nought but my ruin can appease his rage.

OED. No, for this brother with insidious wiles
Hath plann'd my death.

CRE. May ev'ry curse of heav'n
Fall on me if I e'er indulg'd the thought.

Joc.

Joc. His vows, O king, revere, and plighted faith.
If or thy country or thy queen be dear——

Cho. We too must join in the same ardent wish,
And plead his cause.

OED. Must then a baffled prince
Submit to these reproaches from a subject?

Cho. His blameless character, his solemn oath,
At least demand respect.

OED. What would you have,
Or know you?

Cho. We implore thee, prince——

OED. Speak on.

Cho. By friendship's holy name, to spurn not thus
One who so late was nearest to thy heart,
On mere suspicion.

OED. Then you are resolv'd
To sacrifice me to his dark intrigues;
For he or I must fall.

Cho. By yon bright sun,
The leader of the flaming host of heav'n;
I meant not thus. 'Tis agony of soul
For all the woes my bleeding country bears,
Makes me thus urgent.

OED. Let him then be gone,

If

If I must be the victim. Not to his,
But thy request I yield : deep in this heart
Will ever dwell the mem'ry of his crimes.

CRE. Unskill'd to yield, thy stubborn soul is torn
With furied pangs ; those pangs are my revenge.

OED. Hence, villain, hence, lest I revoke my words.

CRE. I go, unmov'd by all thy menaces ;
That cannot shake my innocence, and these
Can best defend it.

CHO. Use thy power, O queen,
To soothe his mind, and urge him to retire.

Joc. But first inform me whence this contest rose.

CHO. From vague reports, uncertain and unjust ;
To both injurious.

Joc. What were these reports ?

CHO. Press me no more, nor let us tear afresh
The wounds of Thebes.

OED. This coldness in my cause,
Becomes you not ; you flight the god's vice-gerent,
And yet profess to venerate those gods.

CHO. Have I not sworn by Phœbus, that my zeal
And duty to my prince remain unshaken ?
To love my country, and not love the man
Who snatch'd it from destruction, were to prove me

Bereft of reason : couldst thou stretch thine arm
Once more to save, how would her farthest bounds
Ring with thy triumph !

Joc. I conjure thee, prince,
Tell me whence sprang this strange dissention.

OED. Know,
Dearest Jocasta, that, with artful wiles,
Thy brother hath conspir'd to seize my throne.

Joc. Your throne, my lord ? Whence could the thought arise ?

OED. 'Twas I, he said, that murder'd Laius.

Joc. Ha !
He could not speak the dictates of his heart.

OED. Nay more, he hath suborn'd a crafty priest,
Who in the presence of near half my empire,
Urg'd home the charge.

Joc. Tho' all the race of priests
United to maintain the glaring lye,
Heed thou them not. No mortal eye can pierce
The dark decrees of fate : they all are bred
In ignorance, and traffic in deceit.
Thyself shall be the judge ; this very prince,
Long since, received an oracle, the work
Of these same priests, (for from the god himself
It could not come, as since events have prov'd ;)

With

With dreadful tidings that from our embrace
 A son should spring, the murd'rer of his fire :
 And now, we hear, that in some gloomy spot,
 Where three ways meet, by robbers he was slain.
 Yet chill'd with horror, ere the third dark morn
 Rose on our babe, we pierc'd its infant feet,
 And slaves convey'd it far away from Thebes,
 To perish on the mountain's pathless heights.
 Say then, could Phœbus utter this decree ?
 For neither did the son his father slay,
 Nor Laius perish by the fate he fear'd.
 Such is the boasted truth of oracles,
 And let the fullen bigot hear and tremble.
 Be thou convinc'd of this ; that what the gods
 Would have us know, they can themselves reveal
 Without the aid of these designing priests.

OED. What sudden terrors seize me ! O, my queen,
 Thy words have fill'd me with amaze and horror.

JOC. How ? Wherefore ?

OED. Saidst thou not the prince was slain
 Where three ways meet ?

JOC. I did ; 'twas thus affirm'd,
 Nor is the fact disprov'd.

OED. But say again,
 Where, in what country did the murder happen ?

Joc. In Phocis, where the public roads divide
To Delphi and to Daulia.

OED. Mighty gods!
How long the period since this dire event?

Joc. Not long before thy reign o'er Thebes began.
The tidings were denounced.

OED. Eternal Jove!
To what am I reserv'd!

Joc. Why is thy mind
Thus agitated?

OED. Ask not, but inform me,
What were the age, form, stature of this Laius?

Joc. In height majestic, years had scarcely ting'd
His locks with silver, and I've often thought
His form a faint resemblance of thy own.

OED. Distraction!—On my own unconscious head
I have call'd down the curse of every god!

Joc. O heavens, I shudder as I gaze upon thee—

OED. Too well, I fear, the prophet knew my fate!
One farther circumstance will prove my guilt,
Or seal my innocence.

Joc. Tho' my lips falter,
Yet ask, and if I know, I will reveal it.

OED. Went he attended with a chosen few,
Or with the pomp and splendor of a monarch?

Joc.

Joc. His train consisted but of five; of these
One was the herald; and one only chariot
That carried Laius.

OED. Then my guilt is sure,
Glaring as yonder sun: but who brought back
The tidings of his death?

Joc. One who alone
Escap'd the gen'ral slaughter.

OED. Lives he now
Within this palace?

Joc. No; his lord no more,
When he beheld thee on the throne of Thebes,
With earnest supplication at my feet,
He sought permission to depart from Thebes,
To feed my distant flocks, nor I refus'd,
For he was ever the most faithful servant.

OED. O haste, let him be summon'd instantly.

Joc. He shall; but why thus eagerly desire
This stranger's coming?

OED. I am on the rack:
His answers may resolve my doubts, and oh!
May plunge me in despair; yet my resolve
Is fix'd to see him.

Joc. He will soon be here.

But oh! my lord, permit thy faithful queen
 To search the bottom of this secret wound
 That rankles at thy heart.

OED. Thou shalt know all :
 Since thy own fate is closely link'd with mine,
 To thee I will unbosom all my soul.
 My father, Polybus, enjoys the throne
 Of Corinth; Merope, his royal spouse,
 By birth a Dorian; there I long possess'd
 Riches and pow'r next only to supreme,
 Till one event, most trivial in itself,
 But dreadful in its issue, crush'd my joys.
 A drunken courtier 'midst his cups proclaim'd
 That Polybus was not my rightful sire.
 Kindling at this, I scarce contain'd my rage
 Till of my parents I enquir'd the truth
 Of this base saying; they alike incens'd,
 Threaten'd with death the author of the charge.
 This calm'd my present fears, but still my mind
 Labour'd with secret doubts. Resolv'd to search
 This mystery of my birth, by private roads
 I sought the Pythian shrine; the holy maid
 Nought of my birth or parentage reveal'd;
 But thus, convuls'd with raving extasies,

Read the dark page of fate—"Thou, wretch, art doom'd
 "To stain thy mother's bed, from thence to raise
 "A race accurst, and last with impious hand
 "To slay the hoary sire who gave thee birth."
 Shudd'ring with horror at these awful sounds,
 With hasty step, from Corinth's fatal towers
 I urg'd my way. Directed by the stars,
 O'er trackless wastes and solitary lands,
 To that lone spot where hapless Laius fell:
 Ah shake not thus, for I will tell thee all—
 Just as I reach'd the pass, where three ways meet,
 A chariot met my sight, where foremost sat,
 Who seem'd a herald; but within reclin'd
 Another, and appear'd of regal port,
 In age, and form, and every circumstance
 Resembling most the man thy words describe.
 Both rush'd against me, and with fury strove
 To drive me back; resentment fir'd my soul:
 Instant I fell'd the charioteer to earth,
 And sprang to meet the chariot, where the sage
 Observant fate, and twice with all his might
 Smote me upon the temples; but in death
 Soon wail'd the rash assault: besmear'd with gore,
 Beneath my staff he fell, and bit the ground.

His

His servants in the general contest fell;
 Not one, I thought, escap'd to tell the news.
 If this were Laius—who, thro' earth's wide bound,
 Is half so wretched as myself, or who
 Like me accurst? No friendly citizen
 Must succour my distress, or stranger ope
 The hospitable door, but drive me hence,
 Far hence, in desert solitudes to weep,
 And 'midst the savage wandr'ers seek a home.
 But oh my bitterest pang, these lips pronounc'd
 The dire decree that drives me from the land,
 From Thebes, from thee, and all my soul holds dear,
 A foul, incestuous, bloody parricide!
 Ah whither shall I go; to Corinth? There
 I seek incestuous transports, there I slay
 The best of friends and fathers. Sure some fiend
 Hurries me on thro' all this maze of guilt.
 But O! ye mightier powers, who rule on high,
 Ere such a scene of horror overwhelm me,
 Crush this devoted head, and let me find
 In death a respite from severer toils.

CHO. O King, we more than share in all thy griefs;
 Perhaps the shepherd may disperse your fears;
 Despair not.

OED. All my hopes are center'd there.

Joc. What is he to reveal?

OED. If he confirm
The thing thou say'st, then am I free from guilt.

Joc. What have I said?

OED. Thou said'st the king was slain
By robbers on his journey ; if he fell
By numbers, I am safe : my single arm
The stranger slew ; but if by one alone,
I am that wretch.

Joc. Doubt not his first report,
From which he dares not swerve. Not only I,
The whole assembled city heard the tale.
But if he swerve, it still remains to prove
That oracles themselves are not impostures ;
For tho' their vaunted god had fix'd his death
On my poor murder'd child, that child thou seest
Perish'd long since on bleak Cithæron's top.
Henceforth my soul is steel'd against belief
Of priests and prophecies.

OED. And well it may ;
But instantly dispatch some trusty slave
To bring this shepherd.

Joc. Thou shalt be obey'd
This instant ; let us go within the palace.
My pride is to obey thee ; and my joy
Is then the greatest when I please thee most.

C H O R U S.

S T R O P H E I.

Eternal Jove! my heart inspire
 With ardent virtue's active zeal, to hear
 Thy voice obedient, and thy laws revere;
 Those heav'n-descended laws, almighty fire,
 Which thy creative energy imprest
 On animated nature's infant breast.

Daughters of light, unlike the race of earth,
 Who range the tracts of day with * steps sublime;
 Still vigorous like the god who gave you birth,
 Beyond the grasp of fate, or bound of time.

A N T I S T R O P H E I.

'Twas insolence first drench'd in blood
 The tyrant's hand; but when elate with pride
 He spurns at right, and dares the gods deride.

From the proud precipice where late he stood,
 That insolence shall dash him headlong down,
 To wail his cruelty and ravish'd crown.

To thee, dread ruler of events below,
 In deep humility behold we bend,

Wisdom and life from thee their fountain flow;
 Oh! from yon heav'ns thy instant succour send.

* Ὑψιπόδες γ' ὠρανίαν δι' αἰθέρα τεχνωθέντες—

S T R O P H E II.

Where do the destin'd sons of rapine rove,
 Who flight the awful voice of nature's God,
 Nor bend with rev'rence at his high abode.

The thunder struggling in the grasp of Jove.
 With strong vibration labours to be gone,
 And sweep them to the gulph of Acheron.

If vice triumphant rear her purple crest,
 And injur'd virtue lift her voice in vain,
 Still shall the tyrant fiend usurp the breast,
 And vainly do we raise the choral strain.

A N T I S T R O P H E II.

Flaming with holy zeal no more
 To Delphi shall the priests of Jove repair,
 Or where Olympia's turrets rise in air,
 With gifts and songs the gods implore;
 If impious tongues those rites prophane,
 And treat their mandates with disdain:

Lord of the universe! their pride controul,
 Avenge thine own; assert Apollo's cause;
 And flash conviction on the stubborn soul
 That spurns thy precepts, and resists thy laws.

A C T IV.

MESSENGER, CHORUS, JOCASTA, OEDIPUS, SHEPHERD.

MESSENGER.

SAGES and chiefs of Thebes, 'tis my resolve,
 With incense, and with suppliant boughs, to seek
 The temple of the gods: your prince, so high
 For wisdom fam'd, and fortitude of soul,
 Forgets that he is man. His mind is torn
 With dismal terrors of he knows not what,
 And shrinks at each unmeaning tale he hears:
 I urge, intreat, expostulate in vain—
 Heav'n is provok'd, I fear; on thee we call,
 All-seeing Phœbus, nearest still to hear
 The wretch's plaint, arm thou his wav'ring thought
 With wonted firmness. He whose skilful hand
 Should guide our bark, the pilot of the state,
 Sinks at the helm, and the tumultuous sea
 Will soon ingulph us all.

MESSEN. Inform me, strangers,
 Where shall I find the palace of your king,
 Or soonest where himself?

CHO. This is his palace:

The

The king is now within ; thou seest his queen.

MESS. Is she indeed the wife of Oedipus?
Most happy may she live, nor she alone,
But all around her share the gen'ral joy.

Joc. I thank thee, stranger, for thy friendly greeting;
But quickly tell me wherefore art thou come,
And what thy tidings?

MESS. Welcome, mighty princefs,
To thee and Oedipus.

Joc. What are they, say;
And whence thyself?

MESS. From Corinth, and I bring
News that will give you both delight and grief.

Joc. Instant explain thy meaning.

MESS. If report
Lye not, the race of Isthmus have resolv'd
That Oedipus shall reign o'er Corinth.

Joc. How?
Is not then Polybus their king?

MESS. He was ;
But death hath laid the hoary king in dust.

Joc. How! Polybus no more?

MESS. May more than death
Befall thy slave, if his report prove false.

Joc. Haste to thy master with the joyful news.

Fly instant;—where, ye lying oracles,
 Diviners, where is now your boasted truth,
 Prophets and Priests? For Oedipus long since,
 Fearing lest he should shed this monarch's blood,
 As Phœbus had foretold, from Corinth fled
 In willing exile. Now forsooth we hear
 That by the common course of fate he died,
 Without or fraud, or violence.

OED. O! my queen,
 Why am I summon'd from my palace hither?

JOC. For this; to learn the truth of oracles:
 That stranger there will best explain my words.

OED. Who is he? Whence, and what his message, say.

JOC. He comes from Corinth, and his tidings are,
 That Polybus, your father, is no more.

OED. Is this thy message; is it thus indeed?

MESS. Ev'n as the queen hath said.

OED. But speak again:
 How died the prince; by treason or disease?

MESS. Ah prince, a little violence will bow
 The languid limbs of age.

OED. Disease then crush'd
 The good old monarch.

MESS. Yes, disease in part,

And part the pressure of a length of years,
For he had * measur'd out the life of man.

OED. 'Tis well : what blinded wretch will now regard
Altars, and priests, and birds of ominous wing,
Screaming aloft ? whose false and base decrees
Had plung'd my hand in blood, a father's blood,
Who died, it seems, remote from Thebes and me,
Bow'd down with weight of years : these hands unstain'd,
And guiltless of his blood. Unless, perchance,
Continual sorrow for the loss of me
Prey'd on his heart, and hurried on his fate.
Thus only could I cause his death : but he
Sleeps in the bosom of the grave ; nor priests,
Nor oracles shall break his long repose.

Joc. Did I not tell thee this ?

OED. Thou didst ; but still
Severest apprehensions shook my soul.

Joc. Away with them for ever.

OED. I ut the bed
Of incest, how it harrows up my thoughts !

* Μακρῶ γε συμμετρίμενος χρόνῳ.

The same expression occurs in the Psalms ;

“ Make me to know the measure of my days.”

39th Psalm, 4th Verse.

Joc. Let not vain terrors agitate thy mind ;
 Man is the sport of chance ; the pow'rs divine
 Lost in the nobler pleasures of the skies,
 Need not our reptile race. The task be his
 To husband well his life, and rove at large
 Where fancy leads, or pleasure points the way.
 Fear not th' incestuous bed, nor be the slave
 Of frantic zeal nor superstitious dreams :
 For oft, amidst the slumbers of the night,
 Have men in visions reap'd incestuous joys.
 True happiness is his, who boldly spurns
 Such vain chimeras.

OED. True ; but still she lives,
 This mother, whom I dread, and I must fly
 Th' accurs'd embrace.

Joc. Go to thy father's grave ;
 Let that inform thee what thou hast to fear.

OED. Yet, yet I shudder : and, while she survives,
 I still must tremble.

MESS. Say, illustrious prince,
 What is this woman whom thou fear'st so much ?

OED. 'Tis Merope, my friend, the late espous'd
 Of Polybus.

MESS. But whence proceed your fears ?

OED.

OED. From oracles most dreadful to relate!

MESS. And may a stranger know them?

OED. Thou shalt hear :

Apollo hath denounc'd, that I should stain
A mother's bed with incest, and these hands
Drench in paternal blood—For this, long since,
I fled from Corinth, and have here enjoy'd
Each earthly bliss, save that most sweet of all,
The dear delight a parent's presence gives.

MESS. Was this the motive of thy exile?

OED. This,

This dread alone of parricidal guilt—

MESS. What if I prove the messenger of joy,
And bring thee tidings such as may disperse
Thy every doubt?

OED. Ah, dearest stranger, speak them;
Thy recompence shall be most princely.

MESS. Yes,
I come to chase thy fears, relieve thy doubts,
And hail thee back to Corinth.

OED. Never, never!
While one of those dear parents still survives,
Will I return to Corinth!

MESS. Son, I see

Thy

Thy ignorance hath caused these idle fears.

OED. Indeed! By heav'n inform me where I err.

MESS, If for this cause thou fled'st.

OED. The curse denounc'd

By Phœbus, drove me into willing exile.

MESS, The dread of murder, and incestuous crimes.

OED. The fame.

MESS. Thy fears are groundless.

OED. Not if these

My parents were, or true the voice of Jove.

MESS. Know then that Polybus by ties of blood
Was never bound to thee.

OED. How? Speak again:

Not Polybus my fire!

MESS. No more than mine.

OED. And yet he call'd me son.

MESS. His by adoption.

These hands first gave thee to his fond embrace.

OED. And could an alien kindle in his soul
A father's transports?

MESS. He had never known

A father's joys.

OED. Was I by purchase thine,
Or may I hail thee by a father's name?

MESS.

MESS. I found thee in a deep and darksome
Of Mount Cithæron.

OED. Ha! what led thee there?

MESS. My flocks, that ranged the mountains verdant fides.

OED. Thou wert a shepherd then it seems.

MESS. I was;

And more, the shepherd that preserv'd thy life.

OED. What had befall'n me, ere thy guardian hand
Snatch'd me from death?

MESS. The joints of thy own feet
Will best inform thee what.

OED. Ah why repeat
That antient malady?

MESS. Mine was the hand
That loosed their tendons from the intangling cords.

OED. Thus early did my woes commence?

MESS. To this
Thou owest the name of Oedipus.

OED. Ah me!
Which of my parents could be thus inhuman;
Canst thou inform me?

MESS. That he best can tell
Who gave thee to me.

OED. Then thou found'st me not;

E e

But

But from another didst receive me ?

MESS. Yes,

A brother shepherd gave thee to my charge.

OED. O speak his name, his residence, whate'er
Thou know'st of this same shepherd.

MESS. He was call'd

A servant of king Laius.

OED. Laius ? ha !

The same who govern'd Thebes ?

MESS. The very same :

He was his shepherd.

OED. Is he still alive ;

Could I behold him ?

MESS. These his countrymen

Can better tell thee.

OED. O my friends, declare

If aught ye know, or aught, perchance, have heard

Of such a shepherd ; whether he resides

At Thebes, or in the country ; instant speak :

'Tis of the last importance to our welfare.

CHO. O king, if right we judge, he seems the man
Whom thou hast lately summon'd : but the Queen
Is best acquainted.

OED. Princess, dost thou know

Whether

Whether the man this shepherd hath describ'd,
And he whom thou hast sent for, be the same ?

Joc. I know not what he said, or whom he meant :
Nor is there aught of moment in his words ;
Dark, idle words ; thou art too anxious, prince :
Act not thus rashly.

OED. What ? Must I neglect
To trace this mystery of my birth, when now
The path is open, and the prospect fair ?

Joc. By heav'n forbear ; I tell thee 'tis a rock
Thy peace will split on : if thou valuest life
Or happiness, forbear. O this torn heart !

OED. Hence, woman, with thy fears ; I am resolv'd :
Were all my ancestors a race of slaves,
'Twere no disgrace to thee ; I fav'd your empire ;
In that one deed was more nobility,
Than all the glories of your line can boast.

Joc. By all thy soul holds dear, beware the search.

OED. Not all thy eloquence can shake my purpose
To trace this matter to the very source.

Joc. Oh hear my better counsel, and forbear :
Shun it as death.

OED. Thy counsel but involves me:

In tenfold error.

Joc. Wretched, wretched prince !
May heav'n still hide the secret from thy view,
Nor curse thee with the knowledge of thy birth.

OED. Let other messengers be sent, in haste,
To bring this lingering shepherd to our presence :
And leave the queen to glory in her birth,
And antient lineage.

Joc. Wretched, wretched prince ;
Obstinate, headlong, to thy own destruction
I leave thee to a search which thou shalt rue
For ever—treasure in thy heart those words ;
Remember they're my last—my last ! farewell.

[*Exit* Jocasta.

CHO. Sire, didst thou mark Jocasta's fix'd despair !
With what confused and eager looks she fled :
Much, much I fear her silence does presage
Events of dreadful issue !

OED. Let them come :
Still my resolve is fix'd to penetrate
This mighty cloud that hangs around my birth :
Whate'er my fate, I must not, will not more
Be kept in darkness : this it is that stings
Her haughty soul : she thinks that I shall prove

Of rank, and parents, humbler than her own.
 Blind woman! but my parents were not mean.
 Thou wert my mother, fortune; and thy son
 Glories in his descent: sublimer far
 Than all the kings of earth: the kindred months,
 Offspring of time, coeval with the world,
 Salute me as they roll their mighty round,
 And call me brother. Led thro' arduous toils,
 By you I triumph on the throne of Thebes,
 Power in my nod, and fortune in my smile:
 And from the glorious height look down secure,
 Whoe'er my fire, a monarch or a slave.

S T R O P H E.

A prophet's spirit warms my soul!
 I see, I see the mighty visions dawn;
 And all the scenes of fate unroll!
 By great Olympus, ere another morn,
 Cithæron, skirt thy dusky front with gold,
 Thou shalt the long, mysterious maze unfold.
 Then to our king shall swell the choral song,
 Our feet in mystic dance more swiftly move;
 And while our grateful measures we prolong,
 Phœbus shall listen, and the strain approve.

A N T I S T R O P H E.

What bright celestial gave thee birth ?
 O thou, whose wisdom speaks that birth divine:
 Renown'd above the fons of earth ;
 From Jove descended, or the sister Nine.
 Say art thou sprung from sylvan Pan's embrace,
 With some fair daughter of ætherial race ;
 Or wert thou nourish'd in Cyllene's groves,
 Where Mercury the swifter nymphs pursues ;
 Or on the sacred hills where Bacchus roves,
 And courts in laurel bow'rs the bashful muse ?

OED. Friends, if my judgment err not, yonder sage,
 This way advancing, is the same whom late
 We summon'd hither; both in age, and mien,
 Resembling whom this stranger hath describ'd.
 My servants too support him: you, perchance,
 May better know him.

CHO. 'Tis the same, my lord,
 The faithful shepherd of our good old king.

OED. Stranger, is this the man ?

MESS. I know him well.

OED. Old man, draw near; look up with confidence,
 And answer faithfully what I shall ask.

Didst thou not live with Laius?

SHEP. Yes, my lord;
Nor was I of the hireling train, but bred
Within this palace.

OED. What thy office, speak?

SHEP. My office was to tend the royal sheep.

OED. And whither chiefly didst thou lead those sheep?

SHEP. To Mount Cithæron, and the neighbouring plains.

OED. Say, dost thou recollect that stranger's face?

SHEP. That stranger—who? Whence is he? What his crime?

OED. I say again, reflect; and call to mind
If thou hast ever had, or intercourse,
Or converse with him.

SHEP. Sire, with age, and cares,
My memory fails.

MESS. Nor is there cause of wonder:
But I'll refresh his memory, and recount
Some antient facts he soon will call to mind.
I am that shepherd who for three whole months,
Thro' long successive years, thy friendship shar'd
On Mount Cithæron's heights—early as spring
Bade the young herbage shoot; ev'n till the rise
Of pale Arcturus: and when winter's frosts
Deform'd the year, each with his sev'ral flocks

Departed

Departed homeward; to my cottage I,
And thou to Laius' palace: have these scenes
Entirely fled thy thoughts?

SHEP. Almost they had;
For 'tis a long, long period since.

MESS. 'Tis true:
But can'st thou, shepherd, to remembrance call
An infant whom I once receiv'd from thee,
And promis'd all a father's fostering care?

SHEP. An infant, friend? What means thy question?

MESS. This,
This is that infant, whom thou now behold'st.

SHEP. Away with thee, thou rav'st: perdition seize
Thy traitor's tongue.

OED. Why art thou thus incens'd?
Thou art thyself more worthy of reproof.

SHEP. In what have I offended?

OED. By thy rage,
And silence touching this same child.

SHEP. Ah, Sir,
He knew not what he said.

OED. Ease my suspense,
Or by the gods I'll force the secret from thee.

SHEP.

SHEP. Ah ven'rate hoary age !

OED. Quick, bind his hands.

SHEP. What must I do, my lord, or what disclose ?

OED. Delay not, but inform me, didst thou give
An infant to this man ?

SHEP. I did, and oh !
Death had that moment been my happiest boon.

OED. This day thou diest, unless I know the whole
Of this dark scene.

SHEP. Ah spare the dire recital :
'Tis death to tell thee.

OED. Dost thou trifle with me ?

SHEP. Did I not say I gave the child ?

OED. Go on ;
Whence came he ? Was he thine by birth, or who
Consign'd him to thy charge ?

SHEP. He was not mine ;
I had receiv'd him from another hand.

OED. What other ? Speak his name, and where he dwells.

SHEP. By all the pow'rs above, enquire no more :
I do conjure thee.

OED. If I ask again,
Wretch, thou shalt die.

SHEP. In yonder palace born——

OED. Sprung from a slave, or was the king his fire?

SHEP. Oh misery to declare—

OED. Oh! Death to hear!

Yet speak—

SHEP. He was suppos'd the king's own son.

But well Jocasta knows the gloomy truth;

She can instruct thee best.

OED. Didst thou from her
Receive the child?

SHEP. 'Twere fruitless to deny
What fate itself reveals.

OED. What was her purpose?

SHEP. That I should kill it.

OED. What, destroy the child?
Bloody, inhuman parent!

SHEP. Dire affright,
From dreadful oracles, compell'd the queen
To this unnatural deed.

OED. How, oracles?
What did they threaten?

SHEP. That this son should slay
Those who begat him.

OED. But if such her fears,
Why didst thou give it to this shepherd's care?

SHEP. Compassion for the infant wrung my soul;
I hop'd he would have borne his charge away,
Far, far from Thebes, and these his native roofs:
Fatal mistake! that life to him was death,
Preserv'd to long, unutterable woes—
For oh! if thou be'st he, thou art indeed
The most ill-fated, most accurst of men.

OED. 'Tis done; the tenfold mystery bursts to light;
I am that most ill-fated, most accurst.
Thou sun farewell; why smile thy beams on me,
Whom murder blackens, and whom incest stains?
Incest and murder of the deepest hue:
A father slain, a mother's bed defil'd!
Come night, come horror shield me from his rays;
Plunge me in thick impenetrable glooms,
Black as my crimes, and boundless as my guilt.

C H O R U S.

O man, thou shadow of a shade!
How soon thy brightest glories fade!
What higher boon could fortune give,
What nobler gifts could man receive,
Than late she shower'd on our devoted king;
Only to plunge him deeper in despair,
And ratify the solemn truths we sing?

At yon sad spectacle of woe,
 Who can refrain the starting tear!
 What tongue the bitter plaint forbear,
 "That mis'ry is the lot of all below!"
 Blind fav'rite of a nymph more blind,
 She bade thee dart thy rapid flight
 Beyond the bound to mortal pride assign'd;
 And plac'd thee on her dizziest height:
 Then thine arm the monster flew,
 Dreadful with her forked fang,
 Whose eagle pinions mock'd the wind,
 And ravening, as in quest of blood she flew,
 To Thebes the prophecies of death she sang—
 For this, thy hand the scepter shar'd,
 An empire was thy great reward.
 But now what sounds of horror meet mine ear?
 How art thou blasted in thy bright career!
 How chang'd in one dark, fatal hour,
 Dash'd from the soaring pinnacle of pow'r,
 And all that mortals vaunt of high and great,
 To wrestle with the toils of fate.
 Thrice wretched prince, renown'd in vain,
 Since all the trophies of thy fame
 Throw but a guilty splendour round thy woes;

Unchill'd with horror, who those crimes shall name
 Whose dark, indelible, eternal stain,
 With infamy pollutes thy bed,
 And dooms to vengeance thy devoted head.
 How could thy conscious bed so long sustain
 Its guilty load, thro' night's incumbent gloom,
 Nor start with horror, and a voice assume !
 But fate hath bared the deed to light,
 Hath bar'd to our astonish'd sight
 A father murder'd by his child,
 A mother by that son's embrace defil'd.
 O that these eyes might ne'er behold thee more,
 But distant far their duteous sorrows pour :
 By thee we rais'd them up to life and light,
 Only to plunge them in eternal night.

A C T V.

CHORUS, MESSENGER, OEDIPUS, CREON.

Enter another MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

MOST honour'd chiefs of this once happy land,
 Rouze all the resolution man can boast
 To fortify your souls, while I relate
 A direr tale than ever reach'd your ears—
 Unfold a scene to your astonish'd eyes
 More black with woe than e'er those eyes beheld:
 Not the broad Danube's waves, nor Phasis stream,
 Can purge away the complicated crimes
 That stain these guilty roofs; in dark array
 They rise to view, and as they rise, pollute
 The sickening light—fate rules the gloomy hour,
 And rash despair, impatient, rushes on
 To deeds of added horror.

CHO. Added horror!

We

We thought the catalogue of this day's woes
Already swell'd beyond the pow'r of fate.

MESS. No; to compleat our sufferings, she reserves
A stroke more dreadful still: the queen is slain.

CHO. Jocasta slain—by whom? What daring hand—

MESS. She dar'd herself the deed: no conscious eye
Was witness to her death. What we beheld
These faltering lips shall tell. With hasty step,
Enrag'd, she burst within the palace gates—
Then, rushing to the bridal chamber, tore,
With savage fury, her disorder'd hair;
Invoking Laius from the tomb to view
A wretch, the fatal source of all his woes,
Who bore his murderer, clasp'd the parricide,
That son, that murd'rer, in abhorr'd embrace,
And stain'd his bed with incest; then with shrieks
Of wildest grief, she wail'd th' accursed couch
That witness'd to her dark, forbidden joys:
Nor heard we more; for instant we beheld
The wretched Oedipus, in frantic mood,
Raving thro' all the dome: with thund'ring voice
Commanding us to bring him sword or spear,
To end his hated being. “Lead me where
These eyes, e'er veil'd in darkness, may behold

That

That injur'd form I dare not call my wife ;
 Her who begat me, her, whose glowing limbs,
 Unconscious, clasp'd the husband and the child."
 Instant, by some inspiring dæmon led,
 He rush'd upon the double doors that clos'd
 The unhappy queen, and from their brazen bolts
 Tore them, while far and wide the hollow dome
 Resounded back his cries : but soon new scenes
 Of horror met our sight, the royal fair
 All pale and breathless, in the fatal noose
 Entangled. Shuddering at the view, the prince
 Recoil'd : then loosing the suspended cord,
 Heav'd a deep groan, and flung him on the ground,
 Convuls'd awhile with agonies of grief.
 When sudden starting, from her robe he tore
 The golden buckle that adorn'd her side,
 And madly plung'd the points into his eyes,
 Exclaiming, " Never more shall I behold
 Or thee, unhappy woman, or the race
 Sprung from thy loins." Bellowing these horrid plaints,
 He pierc'd, he tore from out their mangled orbs,
 The balls of sight : instant the gushing blood
 Its fluices burst, and, rushing down his cheeks,
 Pour'd the black flood that stain'd his princely form.

Such are the complicated ills that crush'd
 This wretched pair. Who lately * reign'd supreme
 In mutual bliss, are now supreme alone
 In misery : curst with more than common woes !
 Their joy was boundless ; boundless was the guilt
 Of such an union ; boundless are their sufferings.
 Ah ! how hath one black fatal morn o'ercast
 The cloudless scene ! how blasted all their joys !
 On ev'ry side are heard the mingled sounds
 Of groans, despair and death—the dismal cries
 Of murderer and of incest—all the stores
 Of secret anguish, and severe distress,
 At once discharging their collective rage.

CHO. Where is the hapless prince ?

MESS. Throw wide, he cries,

Throw wide the gates, and let all Thebes behold
 The murderer of his fire, with incest black,
 With blood defil'd, and crimes without a name—
 Lead me, O lead me from these guilty roofs,
 To banishment, to death—that banishment
 My lips denounc'd will be my best relief

* Great emphasis is in the original laid on the comparison of the present with the former state of Oedipus ; which the Translator could not well convey to the reader without a paraphrase of the two or three succeeding lines.

From all th' insufferable ills that rush,
 With overwhelming rage, at once upon me.
 But words are weak: behold a scene that speaks
 Beyond the boldest pow'rs of eloquence;
 A scene so full of horror, it would move
 His most inveterate foe.

CHO. Ah! sight of grief
 Beyond whate'er my darkest fears had fram'd.
 Rash man! what furious dæmon urg'd thee on
 To this dire act; thus to accumulate
 Woe upon woe to crush thy hapless head?
 Most wretched of the wretched! my swell'd heart
 Had much to utter; but must burst itself
 In silence, for the sight of such distress
 Hath struck me dumb for ever.

Enter OEDIPUS.

OED. Hah! where am I?
 What plaintive accents vibrate on my ear,
 That seem to pity one whom fate hath plac'd
 Beyond the pow'r of pity to relieve!—
 Fortune, my mother, whither art thou fled?

CHO. She hath forsaken thee; hath plung'd thee down
 In an abyss of woes.

OED. O dark! dark! dark!
 Dark without dawn of hope, or beam of day!

I stand envelop'd in eternal shade :
 Remembrance like a fury flings my soul,
 While my own passions sharpen ev'ry goad,
 And drive me on to madness.

CHO. Doubly curst
 Both in a husband's and a father's hopes,
 Well may thy reason fail thee in this hour
 Of multifold affliction.

OED. Art thou here !
 Thou, once my friend and guide in happier hours.
 This, this was Oedipus.—Abject and blind,
 Thou wilt not leave me to severer pangs.

CHO. What hast thou done ? What vengeful god impell'd
 To this mad deed ?

OED. Phœbus, himself,—yes, Phœbus,
 Is that avenging, that impulsive pow'r.
 That I am blind, impute to me alone,
 'Twas I who quench'd those orbs, whose light but serv'd
 To kindle horror, and awake despair.

CHO. Ah! dreadful truth !

OED. What, what remains
 Grateful to me, in voice, or sight, or sound ?
 Each joy extinct, and earth one barren void.
 Rouze you, my friends, in injur'd virtue's cause ;

Drive from your land this pestilential bane,
This monster, black with incest and with blood;
This most abhorr'd of gods, and all mankind.

CHO. Thy suff'rings make thee rave. Ah! fatal hour
When first I hail'd thee on the throne of Thebes!

OED. And Oh! more fatal hour that saw my feet
Loos'd from their bands on bleak Cithæron's height.
Curst be the hand that loos'd them. 'Twas not life
That hand bestow'd; 'twas death. I then had died
In innocence, nor known, nor caus'd a pang.

CHO. Oh thus had fate ordain'd——

OED. I had not then
Imbrued my hand in blood—I had not then
Receiv'd Jocasta to my guilty bed.
I should not then——

CHO. How! What shall I advise thee,
Since death itself were better far than life
Wasted in mis'ry and perpetual gloom?

OED. The loss of sight, my friends, I least bewail:
Ah! with what * eyes in Pluto's dark domain,

* It appears from this passage, that the ancients supposed the same qualities both of mind and body to be possessed by the dead which they had while living.

Thus Virgil:

—— Laniatum corpore toto
Deiphobum videt, et lacerum crudeliter ora.

Æneid, lib. 6. 495.

Could Oedipus have view'd his murder'd fire,
 Cover'd with wounds, and welt'ring in the blood
 His impious offspring spilt; or her who bore
 The parricidal wretch, whose foul embrace
 Hath stain'd the conscious womb that gave him life?
 Could e'er this heart a parent's joy have known,
 To view the offspring of that foul embrace,
 Tho' fair in virgin beauty, hast'ning on
 Thro' long progressive misery, to complete
 The measure of my woes, and share my guilt!
 Ah! never, never could these eyes behold them;
 Never the lofty citadels of Thebes,
 Her gilded palaces, her beauteous fanes,
 And her bold race that own'd me king in vain,
 Since now debas'd below the meanest slave.
 Oh painful, bitter change! These lips pronounc'd
 The curst decree that drives me from the land
 The execrated scorn of you and heav'n,
 A foul, incestuous, bloody parricide.—
 Thus with a thousand objects compass'd round,
 To wound anew my agonizing heart,
 Blindness is but relief from weightier ills.
 Grant me, ye mighty rulers of the world,
 Some pow'r to bar the passages of sound,

To shut each sense, and quite extinguish thought,

For ev'ry sense is now alive to woe.

Ah why, Cithæron, did thy arched glooms

Lend their broad shade to screen my infant head?

Why did not some devouring savage rend

My scatter'd limbs, and give them to the winds;

That my disgraceful birth might never stain

The annals of mankind?—O Polybus,

And thou, O Corinth, falsely deem'd my country,

How have ye nourish'd in these princely robes,

Beneath this specious form a canker'd wound,

Putrid and rank! for now I stand confess'd

Base in myself, and base in my descent.

Ye conscious forests, ye wide-spreading glades,

And thou dark avenue, where three ways meet,

That drank the blood of my expiring fire;

Witness what guilty transports fill'd my breast

When I beheld his hoary figure fall

Prostrate and bite the ground—how am I chang'd!

How dearly have I rued the triumph, bought

At the high price of ev'ry other joy:

Flung headlong from the bliss of gods, to wail

With dæmons in the hell of deep despair!

O fatal, fatal nuptials! Night of horror!

How have ye stamp'd pollution on the names
 Of father, brother, son—how burst the band
 Of dear relation! Sure around the bed
 Some fierce presiding dæmon fix'd his stand,
 And sow'd the seeds of ev'ry baneful ill.
 Reflection shudders at the black detail—
 I cannot bear the retrospect: my tongue
 Faulters with shame, and ev'ry sinew shrinks.
 Wherefore, by all the gods, approach, and flay
 This victim to my own and others crimes.
 Or bear me to some bleak and barren isle,
 Where sound of human voice was never heard;
 Or plunge me in the deep with all my crimes.
 Fear not, my friends, approach; black as I am,
 Ye cannot, by the touch, partake the guilt,
 Whose weight shall crush this guilty head alone.

CHO. Most opportunely Creon this way bends;
 Creon, on whom thy pow'r and kingly sway
 Will soon devolve, as next of royal line:
 His counsel best will guide us thro' this maze
 Of intricate suspense.

OED. What say'st thou,—Creon?
 That Creon, whom I late so basely injur'd,
 What can I say to him; or how find words
 At once expressive of my shame and grief!

CRE. Think not I come to triumph o'er the fall'n,
 Most wretched prince, or aggravate thy woes
 By insolent reproach : gladly I bring
 Whate'er is mine of counsel or support.
 But ye, my Thebans, if ye shudder not
 At those impurities the very sight
 Of * such deep guilt imparts, at least revere
 The bright and active ray of yonder sun,
 Whose sickening beam abhorrent turns aside
 From that loath'd object, whom the public curse
 Hath doom'd to infamy; forbade t' approach
 Our shrines, our altars, and the lustral dew
 Thrown from the pontiff's consecrating hand.
 O quickly lead him to the inmost gloom
 Of yonder palace, for, in crimes like his,
 There dwells a horror of such dreadful kind,
 As should be sacred from the vulgar eye,
 And only view'd by those in blood allied.

* This speech of Creon has been censured as cruel and contradictory. Creon, however, through the whole of this play, appears a respectable character : he interests himself much in discovering the true sense of the oracle, and in contriving such measures as may best alleviate the miseries of the city. His unwillingness therefore to offend the gods by exposing the detected person, and his determination to do nothing without consulting the oracle, expressed in his next speech, which has likewise been objected to on the same account, are only additional proofs of that ready attention to the divine will, which he manifests in every part of this performance, and which may well be further excited by the alarming examples now before him of the miseries that had arisen from a contrary conduct in others.

OED. Ah! Creon, dearest, yet much injur'd friend,
In me thou seest a melancholy proof
How vain are wisdom's most exalted boasts!
How slippery are the heights of human pride!
Thee late I treated with reproach and scorn;
'Tis now thy turn to triumph: but thy soul,
Too great and gen'rous, scorns th' unmanly thought.
I crave but one poor boon: O grant me this,
And thou'rt indeed my friend.

CRE. Name it; 'tis granted.

OED. This instant banish me from thee and Thebes,
To some drear spot, where I may waste my last
Sad days in solitude, and wail my crimes.

CRE. Thy exile is decreed: but we must first
Consult the gods.

OED. The gods have been consulted;
The firm, irrevocable voice of fate
Hath spoken, that the parricide shall die.

CRE. Yet it beseems us further to enquire
Their will concerning thee.

OED. Concerning me!
Thus foul, thus impious, wouldst thou weary heav'n
With more enquiries?

CRE. Warn'd by thy disasters,

H h

We

We learn to venerate that pow'r whose laws
Thou hast thus violated, thus prophan'd.

OED. But one word more, and I have done for ever—
By every bond of friendship I conjure thee,
By all the ties of nature, to decree
Sepulchral honours worthy of her birth,
And each due rite the illustrious dead demand,
To thy dear sister, and my hapless wife.
For me, the vilest of the sons of Thebes,
Heed thou no farther—once more let me go,
A wand'ring exile from my father's roofs,
From Thebes, as erst from Corinth, and explore
That sacred spot on dark Cithæron's brow,
By those who gave me being doom'd my grave
Early as life began; for ah! I feel,
Within this breast I feel the dire presage,
That fate denies me by the common lot
Of man to fall; snatch'd from the jaws of death,
To perish by the signal wrath of Jove,
Long treasur'd for the moment: what that stroke
I know not; but despair hath arm'd my soul——
Dearest of men, my children I commend
To thy protecting arm; my sons are firm

In health and manhood; they will least require
 Thy friendly aid: but oh! my hapless daughters—
 Dear blooming orphans, with such anxious care
 Cherish'd beneath these roofs in royal state;
 Fed by my hand, and by my watchful eye
 Still guarded: how will those poor babes support
 At once a father's and a mother's loss?
 O take them, prince; O shield them with thy power,
 And foster with thy love! Might they be summon'd?
 Might they receive a father's last embrace?
 To touch them would suspend my pains: but oh!
 To glue my clasping arms around their necks,
 Would give me sight, and nerve my limbs anew.
 What have I said of rapture—'tis denied
 To this care-broken heart! To weep their fate,
 And o'er them hang in fix'd and silent woe,
 Is all now left me—but methinks I hear
 Sounds sweet and plaintive, like the tender moans
 Of those dear children: yes, they are my children!
 Creon hath gratified my ardent wish;
 What can I say—oh torture—

CRE. To thy command
 Obedient, I have brought thy children hither.

OED.

OED. Eternal blessings on thee for this kindness!
 Come near, my daughters; shudder not to touch
 Your father, and your—brother: view the hands,
 Yet red with gore, whose fury hath consign'd me
 To everlasting darkness, and forbade
 The sight of you and heav'n: a king myself,
 And yet a regicide, by heav'n and man
 Alike abhorr'd: approach, and weep my fate,
 But do not curse me with the name of parent.
 Yes, to behold your angel smiles, that once
 Gave vigour to my pulse, is mine no more.
 Yet I can weep your fate, and I will weep
 In tears of blood warm gushing from the heart.
 With patient fortitude I might have borne
 My own disasters, but the sense of yours
 Hath quite unmann'd me. Whither will ye go
 For respite from your toils, or how assuage
 The madness of despair? From public haunts,
 And all the gay delights of social life,
 Driv'n with disgrace, your virgin bloom to waste
 In barren solitude, and execrate
 The name of father. Ye must never taste
 The sweets of Hymen, nor with eager eyes
 Gaze on a smiling progeny; for who,

Who will receive pollution to his arms,
 Nor shudder at the black impending guilt
 That hangs o'er all the race of Oedipus?
 What horror in the tale! An impious son
 Hath slain his father, and, with guilty fires
 Flaming, defil'd his mother's sacred bed.
 Pursu'd with jealous hatred by your sex,
 And exil'd by the voice of all mankind—
 Thus shall ye pass your wretched days, till death,
 Thrice welcome, close the solitary scene.
 Thou, Creon, thou art left their only friend;
 Ah! suffer not my poor, forsaken babes,
 Like vagabonds, to wander o'er the earth
 The sport of infamy: dear, generous youth,
 Extend thy hands, as pledges of thy faith
 And firm support: much, O my daughters, much
 My heart would utter more, but grief forbids.
 This is my only pray'r, that you may live
 Resign'd and happy, as your fate will suffer,
 Where heav'n may best ordain: and may that heav'n
 In rich abundance on my childrens head
 Shower down the blessings it denies your fire.

CRE.

CRE. Enough : thy grief transports thee ; O ! retire
Within the palace.

OED. I obey thee, prince ;
Yet shudder to approach that fatal scene
Of all my guilt.

CRE. 'Tis right * thou should'st retire :
Time and events require it.

OED. Know'st thou not
By what dire curses I am bound——

CRE. Declare them.

OED. To leave those roofs, and thou to drive me thence——
O prince, with swiftness execute the task.

CRE. The gods alone can grant thee thy desire.

OED. I am most hateful to those gods.

CRE. Fear not ;
They will befriend thee here.

OED. Ah might I hope !

CRE. Thou may'st ; I speak with confidence.

OED. Then lead,
Whither thou wilt.

CRE. But let thy children stay.——

OED. Wilt thou bereave me of my children too !

* The original faith, " All things are right on right occasions : " The text seems designedly equivocal and obscure.

CRE. Submit—Warn'd by thy suff'rings, Oh! beware
Of that perverseness thou hast rued so dearly.

CHO. Inhabitants of Thebes, behold your prince,
The mighty Oedipus, whose soaring thought
Pierc'd the dark riddle of the monster Sphynx;
Whose fame * and pow'r, beyond example great,
What son of Cadmus but with envy view'd?—
That prince behold, by sad reverse of fate
Fall'n from his throne of grandeur to the depth
Of abject misery—Mortal, mark his fate;
Nor him, whom fortune's changeful smile adorns
With momentary triumphs, call thou blest,
'Till death decide, and stamp the name of "happy."

* ὅστις οὐ ζήλω. —————

As the text now stands, this is a very difficult passage, and the translations are ambiguous and unsatisfactory. A friend told me of a proposed emendation by the learned Editor of Euripides, Doctor Musgrave.

ὅν τις οὐ ζήλῳ πολίων τῆς τύχης ἐπεβλεπεν.

The passage becomes thus interrogative, and the sense is, "whom, who was there of the citizens, but beheld with envy in consequence of his good fortune?" This sense I have adopted, as the most easy to be translated, and best expressive of the meaning of Sophocles.

T H E E N D.

